# Meridiana:

## *Noontide Essays*

*Sir Herbert Maxwell, Bart.*

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# NOONTIDE ESSAYS

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# Meridiana:

## Noontide Essays

BY

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL, Bart., M.P.

AUTHOR OF 'PASSAGES IN THE LIFE OF SIR LUCIAN ELPHIN,' ETC.

"*And if I laugh at any mortal thing*
*'Tis that I may not weep.*"
—Don Juan, iv. 4.

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# S. S. L. D.

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The Book of the Order of S. Victor of Paris contains the following rule :—

"In summer it shall be lawful for any of the Brethren to read for an hour at noon in the dormitory, provided that care be taken not to make a crackling noise in turning the leaves. At that hour the Brethren may recline, but without undressing, and must on no account extend their feet beyond the beds."

This noontide siesta was called Meridiana—a slumberous appellation, suggestive of light reading in a cool chamber, what time the sun beat fiercely on the roof-tiles, and only the lizards could endure the heat. The drowsy purpose of such an hour may be served by the

following papers, which have already appeared in 'Blackwood's Magazine,' except that on "Birds," which is here reprinted by kind permission of the editor of the 'Nineteenth Century,' and the address on Education, hitherto published only in the local newspapers.

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# NOONTIDE ESSAYS.

## ANCIENT LIGHTS.

I HAD been spending one of the most delightful and exciting afternoons I ever remember. Fond as I am of pictures, and unwilling to miss visiting any of the annual exhibitions, yet I find a gallery a most trying place. My frame is generally bowed with fatigue, my legs ache wofully—long before my eyes are satisfied with the feast. Apart from the physical strain of standing about for hours, there is something in the motionless, warm air of most picture-shows that takes it out of you; then it is cold outside—you carry in with you a thick overcoat that soon weighs like lead, there is nowhere to deposit it, you must bear it about till you are half cooked; and in addition to all this, there is the too plentiful presence of your fellow-creatures. A knot of people have gathered just in

front of a small picture you are especially anxious to examine: they have got into interminable conversation about the parochial affairs of Sludgebury, or the County Council of Potatoshire; they could carry it on just as well anywhere else, but there they stand—bulky, vociferous, abominably good-tempered: the conference seems likely to last half the afternoon. You pass on in despair, and presently become absorbed in contemplation of another work, till you are reminded by an *aura* of impatience behind you that you are yourself obstructing the view of others equally anxious, perhaps, to get a fair view of the piece. All this and a thousand other little inconveniences combine to make your recreation a test of physical endurance.

But here—to-day—in the New Gallery, among the enchanting objects which compose the Guelph Exhibition, all had been different. In the first place, it had so happened that there were comparatively few visitors; and these had seemed as much attracted by the miniatures, letters, jewellery, &c., shown in cases in the centres of the rooms, as in the pictures on the walls. But in the next place, there was the peculiar nature of the exhibition itself. Viewed merely as a collection of pictures, it must be frankly owned that the standard was not high. Pot-boilers abounded—too few of them bearing comparison with the noble pot-boilers of Franz Hals, in which every stroke of the brush tells of confident freedom and knowledge, the fruits of thorough training and hard work—too many of them betraying conventional treatment, faulty

materials, or hurried execution, as if the painter had been impatient to get to the coffee-house.

Yet it would be difficult to find a more satisfying expanse of colour than that displayed on the walls of the North Gallery. A few marble busts at long intervals were relieved on a background of mellowed canvas, and the eye was not cloyed with the profusion of new gilding that detracts so painfully from the charm of an exhibition of modern pictures. The feeling of gold was there, but the metal was tarnished, and worn to a low harmony.

But it was for the mind rather than the senses that this treat had been prepared; here Mnemosyne, the muse of Memory, presides. Of all the centuries of English history, none lays hold more powerfully on the imagination than the eighteenth; remote enough to be romantic, it is not so long past as to be indistinct. None of the previous centuries have been brought so thoroughly within our understanding by literature; the influences which actuate us, the aspirations which inspire us, the customs we observe, seem to have taken their birth among the men and women with whom Chesterfield, Walpole, Selwyn, and Boswell have made us so intimate. Admit that this is a superficial view of our civilisation, but admit also that the gulf which separates us from mediæval feeling lies on the far side of the seventeen hundreds, and that nothing divides us from the people of last century but the accident of—death. Even this separation was hard for a visitor to the Guelph Exhibition to realise

as he encountered the gaze of so many well-known personages, whose eyes followed him somewhat wistfully as he passed along.

So, as I have said, the afternoon had been to me one long delight. The excitement of meeting—in the flesh, I had nearly said—at all events, of being in the visible presence of illustrious men and beautiful women, who had all borne a part in the making of England, had prevented my feeling the exhaustion I had surely earned. I drew a long sigh of gratitude on coming to the end of the gallery up-stairs, and finding a bench in a retired corner, I sat down to rest and meditate for a few minutes in the growing dusk. But the bodily part of me had its revenge for the long innings of the intellectual, and lulled by the tinkle of the fountain in the central court, I fell fast asleep.

When I awoke, all was dark and silent. I shall never forget the bewilderment—the utter impossibility of recollecting where I was. I had actually to retrace mentally every action of the previous day, from the time I had left my house till I visited the pictures, and then—it was all clear. I had slept so long and so sound that I had been overlooked when the gallery was closed for the night, and—I WAS LOCKED IN.

I had not even a lucifer-match to enable me to see my watch. I was in total darkness, and scarcely dared to move, lest I should fall down some stairs, or run against a glass case. It was not cold—that was something to be thankful for, and, after all, the morn-

ing must come, and I had spent nights in far worse quarters than this. I was hungry, not ravenously so, for, with advancing years, I have grown to rely more on luncheon and less on dinner than of yore; still, visions of *consommé aux œufs pochés* floated tantalisingly before me, and I thought tenderly of *côtelettes purée de marrons.* I rose and stretched myself: my slumbers on an oaken bench had been soft, but still—oak is oak and flesh is flesh. A clock within the building struck twelve, and suddenly, as the last sound of the bell died away, I became aware of a soft light spreading itself through the rooms. It grew steadily, till at last every object was plainly visible—as plainly as in broad daylight, but with a difference. I cannot describe the strange nature of this light: it was very pure, very soft, yet penetrating, but it took me some minutes to realise its peculiarity—*it cast no shadows.* It was indeed the "light that never was on sea or land." The effect produced was one of interminable space: the walls of the building and the picture-frames seemed to recede or become intangible, though the pictures themselves remained as clear as before. Nay, more so; for presently they appeared to disengage themselves, and I could hardly persuade myself that they were not living, though motionless, men and women. Their outlines rounded themselves or became more distinct, the discoloration of age or varnish slipped aside like a film, fresh hues revived in faded cheeks and tarnished dresses. And presently they began to move. I left my place and wandered

about like one in a trance. With the darkness silence had ceased: the air was full of sound, but sound as unfamiliar and unearthly as the light. I could not at first distinguish its origin or nature, but as my ears became accustomed to it, I recognised it as the articulate speech of a crowd. I could catch words and sentences as one does in the babble of a large assembly; but, though it was human and English speech, it had the indescribably small yet startlingly near character of a voice sounding through a telephone. *The voices were those of the spirits of the pictures.*

I was still in the balcony; but no sooner did I realise that the spirits were speaking than I conceived a strong desire to go to the South Gallery, where the portraits of those distinguished in Arts, Letters, and Science are collected. The narrow staircase happened to be occupied by two persons, one in military uniform, the other a slightly framed, middle-aged man, fantastically draped in a dark-red furred mantle, and wearing a long white lace cravat. I paused behind them, unwilling to interrupt their conversation by attempting to pass.

"I am positively getting tired of this, Harry," said he of the furred cloak. "I own I was delighted with it all at first; but a month among these people has driven me back upon the conviction I formed a hundred and fifty years ago, that hardly one in a hundred of the people we know are worthy of acquaintance, and were it not for you and Mason and

two or three others, I should shrink from jumping out of the shades—like old Mrs Nugent out of her po'chaise—into an assembly."

"Don't be more misanthrope than of yore, dear Horace," returned the soldier, turning so as to show me his handsome and intelligent countenance. "I shall return presently to look for you as soon as I have made my obeisance to the King; and I know I shall find you closely hedged in by the petticoats of all the pretty women in the place. How long have I known you? Who will be more chagrined than you when the time comes that we all have to separate once more? How well I remember your saying that, like a member of Parliament's wife, you revived directly you came to London."

"Yes; but recollect I was then imprisoned in a wretchedly constructed carcass. My life, for the last thirty years of it, was but one long stratagem to escape the gout, but my heart ever lay at Strawberry.

> 'Fortune, who scatters her gifts out of season,
> Though unkind to my limbs, had yet left me my reason.'

I lived much apart. You, who have ever moved in the great world, have been lured into believing in it. I, from my groves—from my philosopher's tub, if you will—obtained a clearer, less prejudiced view, and could distinguish scarcely one who was not either scamp or dullard."

"Horace, Horace!" said the soldier quietly, smiling but shaking his head.

"Harry, you know there are exceptions," returned the other; "none knows better than yourself how grateful I am for them. Never suppose that I hold myself to be one of these exceptions. I have not, like Pope,

> 'Made every vice and private folly known
> In friend and foe, a stranger to his own.'

Nay, I have lived selfishly, peevishly, with shallow joys and narrow aim, but, thank heaven! I have never been found dull. I may have often been hated, but I never was dreaded as a bore. I have seldom been loved, but many have coveted my society. Gods! what is the cruel law of moral chemistry that makes dulness an inevitable ingredient of temperance and chastity? Now begone! do your devoir and return. I shall wait about for you."

Left alone, he paced restlessly up and down the landing muttering to himself, and smiling with a peculiar, calm, though penetrating look in his dark eyes. These, and a sensitive mouth, redeemed the harshness of his features, which were of bloodless pallor, though suffused with the fire of intelligence. I grew impatient to descend to the lower rooms, now crowded with company, whence rose an ever-increasing murmur of voices, and, while attempting to pass the cloaked figure of the unknown, he turned so quickly that I had to draw back with an apology, lest I should have run up against him.

"Beseech you, sir! do not apologise," he exclaimed with a courtly bow.

"I was afraid I startled you, sir," I said.

"Nay, sir, I have no nerves *now*, yet I pray you will not put yourself to the exertion of shouting" (I was aware that my too earthly voice was in loud contrast to the delicate, metallic tones in which I was addressed), "I am not deaf. But stay—I do not know —I have not the honour of recognising your features: your dress too — pardon me — but have I the good fortune to address a living gentleman?"

I owned to the substantial fact.

"I am indeed fortunate: it is what I have longed for for years. Oh, you were afraid of running up against me! My dear sir, you may run *through* me if you please, I should never feel it. I am a have-been —a phantom—a mere *simulacrum*. And you—you are still *really* solid?"

"I am indeed," I answered, excitedly, "and I'm so glad to meet you, for I'm tremendously interested in spooks—I beg your pardon—in spirits. I never saw one before."

"Well, I am infinitely at your service, sir," he rejoined; "and I think I can sympathise with you. Let me make myself known to you—I am the 'uncle of the late Earl of Orford': it is possible you may have heard of me as Horace Walpole." (I bowed.) "Well, as you know, I became Lord Orford later. You look perplexed—permit me to explain. We have been brought here by our great-grandchildren to illustrate the history of our century—that is to say, our portraits have been brought here, and we—that is, our

disembodied spirits—are permitted—nay, directed—to associate ourselves with our pictures each night from twelve to three. This, as you probably are aware, is a standing order in the Shades, wherever our pictures happen to be; the only choice allowed us is as to which of our portraits we shall attach ourselves for the night. Now it so happens that every existing portrait of me hangs in a country-house where it is the rarest thing possible for anything of more consideration than a mouse to be stirring after midnight. Hence the peculiar pleasure which I experienced when I realised that you are still in the flesh."

Then in the politest manner, but with an eagerness which he tried unsuccessfully to disguise, my new acquaintance pressed me with questions about what was going on in the great world—politics, art, the theatres, the law courts, society of rank, the construction and prospects of the Cabinet—on each and all of these he found me totally unable to inform him. For literature and science, the only fields with which I can claim any familiarity, he manifested a deplorable contempt.

"My dear sir," he said, "I am a Fellow of the Royal Society; but I have very rarely attended their meetings. Each time I have done so I have conceived a deeper distaste for the task of Sisyphus; each succeeding generation is engaged in dispelling the fallacies of that which preceded it. As for literature, it is to the realities of life merely what the steam is to the punch-bowl—a pleasantly scented vapour, only a

whet to the thirst of one who has learnt deep drinking."

"Yet you were yourself a successful author," I hazarded. "Lord Byron has affirmed that in the 'Castle of Otranto' and the 'Mysterious Mother' you proved yourself the 'father of the first romance and the last tragedy in our language,' and therefore deserving of higher renown than any of his lordship's contemporaries."

"High praise indeed," said Mr Walpole, "though its value, like water, cannot rise above the level of its source; and I must say I never suspected his lordship of literary proclivities."

"Literary proclivities!" I exclaimed; "that is surely a mild expression for the capacity of the author of 'Childe Harold.'"

"Ah, I see how it is," he replied; "we must be talking of different men. The only Lord Byron whom *I* knew was he who killed poor Mr Chaworth in a duel."

Whereupon I pointed out to him the poet Byron, whom I happened to recognise at the moment, lounging in a doorway, and explained to him that praise from a poet of such high order was praise indeed.

"I see you wonder that I know nothing of your great men. Sir, in the Shades we mingle only with those whom we knew on earth. We see countless—myriad forms; but we have no means of knowing them. Our only chance of becoming acquainted with what is going on in our old homes exists in the ex-

ceedingly rare occasions when we encounter and converse with one still living. You told me that you had never before seen a spirit; only thrice since I breathed my last have I met with living human beings. One was a wretched housemaid, who dropped her candlestick and fled screaming; another was the owner of one of my portraits, who had lingered long over his port in the dining-room where that portrait hung, was seized with apoplexy, and expired in my presence a few minutes after midnight, just as my spirit disengaged itself from the canvas; on the third occasion, a couple of housebreakers, seeing me standing on the carpet, took to their heels. So you must be indulgent to the curiosity I showed just now in questioning you about the affairs of the world. But to return to the subject we were discussing — literature. 'Tis very true, 'tis a pretty pastime for middle and old age—no pleasanter incident than the post bringing the proof-sheets; but it is not work to fill a young, strong life. If a man has learnt to put his mettle into real work before he is thirty, depend upon it he will not be content to spend the rest of his life gathering the leaves of Parnassus."

He spoke scornfully, and being something of a quill-driver myself, I had an uncomfortable feeling of inferiority to the spectre.

"I feel that I am detaining you from the society of your friends below, sir," I said, preparing to move on.

"Friends!" he sighed, with a slight shrug of the

shoulders, "alas! most of these are absent — Mr Chute, Sir Horace Mann, Madame de Deffand—they are not here, though I should not complain, having General Conway, who left us just now, and Mr Mason. Pray, do not leave me; you do not conceive what keen pleasure it gives me to converse with one in warm flesh and blood—sure, there never was one who so loved the world as I, or who understood it so well. Yet I flatter myself I parted with it with some philosophy."

The charm of his manner emboldened me to express the wish that he would point out to me some of the people he knew: he agreed to do so, and as we descended the stairs, he explained how he came to be so fantastically dressed.

"It was a sudden freak. Since we came to town, I have each night attached myself to Hogarth's portrait of me (253) (you see we are all numbered like convicts)——"

"And are out on ticket-of-leave," I interrupted, coarsely enough, though luckily the allusion was lost on Mr Walpole.

——"But to-night," he continued, "the fancy seized me to lodge in a wretched *sopra porta*, that I had done for Mrs Kitty Clive, *dimidium animæ meæ*."

"Ah! *that* accounts, sir, for my not recognising you at once," I exclaimed.

"What!" he replied, "you know my old olive velvet suit. Lord! I had grown sick of it; it clung

to me like a cerecloth, and I had no alternative but to don this masquerade."

The sound of my footfall, the only one in that great assembly, caused every one to look round, though I trod as lightly as possible. People looked at me with a well-bred stare; most of them recognised my companion, and began to crowd round him, so that for some time we got no further than the foot of the staircase.

"You know that lady in the laylock dress?" Mr Walpole whispered to me, as he bowed in return to a gracious smile from a handsome lady, leading a round-faced little boy. "That is Lady Pembroke; verily an earthly paragon, and without doubt she is now a heavenly saint, for her husband inflicted martyrdom upon her. Yonder is he, in a scarlet uniform and a big red face. He left her, you know, and eloped with the pretty Scotch Miss Hunter, and was afterwards brute enough to insult the wife of whom he was unworthy, because she hesitated to divorce him. Of all the ladies I have known, she most fulfils the ideal of *grande dame*."

I remembered the painful story, and as I looked from one to the other of this ill-matched pair, I could not but reflect that the lady, whose face, with all its beauty, told of a cold and formal nature, was scarcely one to hold in thrall a man of violent passions and impulsive disposition.

"La! Mr Walpole, I vow I was dying to meet with you. Come, give me your arm and take me for a

saunter. My good-for-nothing husband has gone off with Mrs Garrick—Lord knows where! Won't you avenge me?"

This was one of the loveliest creatures I had ever seen: she had eyes of wonderful softness and brilliancy, and a charm of gesture and manner, of movement of head and hands, that was altogether bewitching. No wonder that Mr Walpole, forgetful of my existence, turned to offer his arm, saying, "With all the pleasure in life, Mrs Sheridan," but at that moment the hand of another lady was laid on his sleeve, and he bowed low to Elizabeth, Duchess of Devonshire, a charming phantom in clouds of laces, little bows of pink ribbon, light-blue sash, and powdered hair. Oh, what an apparition of beauty! Rest assured that I, in the unmitigated broadcloth of the nineteenth century, carrying a shocking umbrella in one hand and a shabby chimney-pot hat in the other, felt sufficiently abject in her presence.

Mrs Sheridan's eyes flashed wickedly, and her lips formed a decided pout as she drew her hand away from Mr Walpole's arm, and exclaiming, "Nay; but I am not to be put off with the decimal part of a man! 'tis a pity that I never can find you except in vulgar fractions, sir," tossed her pretty head, floated off, and was lost in the crowd.

"What a pretty creature she is!" said the Duchess, as her dark eyes followed the petulant beauty; "I don't wonder Mr Sheridan eloped with her."

"I could condone duelling," answered Mr Walpole, "if the cause was always as worthy as that for which he fought two."

"Poor little thing!" observed the Duchess of Gordon, who, looking charming in her white muslin dress, had joined our group, and had witnessed what had passed, "you should devote yourself to her to-night, Mr Walpole; if she finds her husband she will make him a scene: she has a sharp tongue, and cannot bear to see our friend Sherry as he is to-night."

She made a significant motion of her hand to her lips.

"Ah, is it so again?" sighed Mr Walpole, shaking his head sadly; "the pity of it, the pity of it! that such a matchless wit should be so recklessly blunted. Yet, with such a consort, he, of all men, might surely echo Ben Jonson—

> 'Leave but one kiss within the cup,
> And I'll not look for wine.'"

"Pah! I'd never spend a kiss upon a sot," said the Duchess, tossing her chin.

"Yet they say of you, Duchess, that you spent many kisses in the service of a country that holds more sots than any in the world."

"Fie! Mr Walpole," returned the Duchess, who spoke with a strong Scottish accent, "I cannot have my character traduced before this gentleman" (pointing to me). "Mr Walpole refers," she continued,

addressing herself to me; and as she spoke, her manner, which had been languid and as of one weary, brightened into animation — "Mr Walpole refers, you must know, to my recruiting service. My duke received the king's commission to raise a regiment of Gordon Highlanders: the fellows showed no disposition to enlist in the Hanoverian army, even at the bidding of the Cock o' the North, so I came to the rescue. I allowed every man who would take the shilling to take it with his lips from between mine. I vow I was vastly sorry when the battalion was at its full strength of a thousand."

"Jane, Jane, you are incorrigible!" said the other Duchess; "you always made yourself out worse than you are."

"Better to be a saint, my dear, and act the sinner, than be a sinner and act the saint."

"And how would your Grace judge a poor mime," asked a gentleman in brown coat and lace ruffles, who overheard the last remark, "who both *is* and *acts* the sinner?"

"By a new decalogue, specially framed to embrace every case from Macbeth's to Abel Drugger's," was the reply, "and even that will require a codicil to deal with Mr Garrick, who has shown so little regard for the old law."

It was not a grimace—it was a transformation—that came over the great actor's features; never had I seen a human countenance so completely altered by momentary contortion of the muscles. "Ah!" he

exclaimed, his face resuming its natural intelligent beauty, and his black eyes sparkling merrily, "what can be more appropriate? — here comes the third Grace to complete the group. Your Grace," he said to the beautiful Elizabeth Gunning, Duchess of Hamilton and of Argyll, as she joined us, "we will, if you please, reverse the procedure in the judgment of Paris: I claim to be tried by the three goddesses."

"You must first allot us our parts," answered the third Duchess (in whose beauty, I may remark parenthetically, I was sadly disappointed, though that may have been the fault of the painter), as she took a delicate pinch of snuff from the jewelled box handed to her by the Duchess of Devonshire.

"Unless," replied Garrick, "I am allowed the same facilities as Paris enjoyed, I can only allot the parts according to the make-up; and your Grace, in that magnificent robe of crimson velvet and ermine, can fill no other part but that of Juno. But you must remember that the milliner's art was not allowed to interfere with Paris's impartiality."

"For shame, sir!" cried the Duchess of Gordon; "how dare you make such a suggestion to the mothers of three families?"

All fell a-laughing—though I confess to having felt a little shocked at the freedom with which an actor spoke in the presence of these great ladies.

"Well, well, ladies," observed Garrick, "have it as you will; I throw myself on the mercy of the court, but I beg that in trying my case you will bear in

mind the appeal made by an Irish counsel, who, in defending a prisoner, besought the jury to remember the Scriptural doctrine, that there is more joy in heaven over one guilty person who is acquitted, than over ninety and nine innocent ones who are convicted!"

Suddenly all was hushed, and with a look of comical terror they separated, leaving Mr Walpole and me in the presence of a lady of middle age and extraordinary appearance, fantastically arrayed in oriental dress. I observed that Mr Walpole shuddered slightly, though he was too well-bred to exhibit any expression except one of courteous deference to the new-comer.

"Well, I declare," she exclaimed in a high key, "this is too bad! I heard you all laughing; and I am dying to hear some fun, and they have all run away as if I had the plague. Why did you let them go, Mr Walpole?"

"I never aspired to have the slightest control over persons of your sex, madam," replied he, in tones of mock solemnity. "I can, however, easily divine that their Graces have gone in search of more diverting company than mine."

She gave a discontented little laugh, reminding me for all the world of a wicked fairy.

"Well, sir, and isn't it cruelly cold here to-night! La! how I could ever be fool enough to come back to this odious climate, only fit for seals and wild geese! And then everything is penetrated with the horrid *odeur anglaise*—the smell of coal-smoke. I declare

I have never been clear of the catarrh since I landed."

"Your ladyship's toilet is certainly better adapted for the latitude of the Golden Horn than an island in the North Sea," observed Mr Walpole, with a malicious glitter in his eye, as he glanced at her open vest, wide silken trousers, and girdle which Lady Mary Wortley Montagu chose to wear.

"*You* seem on your way to a *bal masqué*, Mr Walpole," retorted the lady, pointing to the white domino which he carried aside; "the time was, you used to rail at such frivolities. I am glad to see

'Senior et melius fis accedente senecta.'"

I was surprised to hear a lady quote Horace so glibly and with such a correct accent; but Mr Walpole only smiled and said—

"In common with snakes and some other of the lower animals, I possess that of occasionally casting my slough, whereas your ladyship, dove-like, seems to have but one suit of feathers."

"You must at least admit that they are fine ones. But you men are all the same: you would have us all dressed alike, laced and powdered" ("And washed," I heard Mr Walpole mutter), "no matter what our figures and faces are like. Now I hold that the woman who *can* do without stays is a fool to wear them. Ah, I remember what the dear King, when he was Prince of Wales, used to say about me—but you and I, Mr Walpole, have been long enough about

the Court to know that the motto on all palace gates is 'Hush.'"

"Heaven forbid, madam!" ejaculated Mr Walpole, impatiently. "I never was about the Court a moment longer than I could help, and never will be." Then, as if to change the subject, "Pray, don't I see his Grace, your father, yonder? I have not remarked the duke before in our assembly."

"Nay, it is not possible, for by some strange omission his portrait is not hung." (I fancied I heard Mr Walpole mutter under his breath, "It was a greater omission not to hang the original," but perhaps my ears deceived me.) "We poor shades, you know, can only go where are our pictures. But, indeed, I scarcely regret his absence; the duke has been little of a father to me since his unfortunate second marriage. Monstrous! that a man should be allowed to marry a chit of a girl younger than his three married daughters. Did you ever hear the smart epigram written about my young stepmother?—

> 'Her beauty, like the Scripture feast,
> To which the invited never came,
> Deprived of the *intended* guest,
> Was given to the blind and lame.'"

"Ha, ha! yes, I fancy I *have* heard them before.[1] But, indeed, I never fail to wonder at the blindness of the man who, once delivered from matrimony,

[1] Written on Miss Pelham's marriage to Lord Lincoln, these lines occur in a letter of Walpole's to Sir Horace Mann.

chooses to surrender his liberty a second time. *Chi perde moglie e un quattrino, ha gran perdita del quattrino.*"

"In the present instance," said Lady Mary, bridling, "Mr Walpole speaks with *less* than his usual courtesy; he surely forgets that the *moglie* in question was my mother."

My companion bit his lip.

"True," he said, "few persons can vie with your ladyship in the happy use of polyglot quotation. Good evening, Mr Pope," he exclaimed, stopping an ugly little man in a bright green cloak and scarlet cap who was hobbling by; "active as ever, I see, and with an eye upon everybody."

"Mr Walpole, your very humble servant," replied the poet stiffly, rolling his protruding watery eyes.

As soon as Lady Mary caught sight of him she was off, her Turkish draperies flying behind her.

"As for humility—that we know is your constant failing, my dear sir," said Mr Walpole, with his eyes on the retreating figure, "and there is no doubt that on this occasion you have done me valuable service. I believe no one but yourself could put a stop to that woman's tongue. Few people can tempt me to rudeness; but there is something in her restlessness, her vanity, her continual innuendo about the Prince of Wales's passion for her, her scraps of Latin, and her ridiculous affectation, that makes me forget all breeding."

"The lady seems at least to have this singular gift,"

sneered Mr Pope, "that she can make Mr Walpole speak with absolute sincerity."

So saying the poet passed on, leaving Mr Walpole somewhat disconcerted. He turned to me with a shade of confusion, and remarked—

"The aid of a common libeller to rid one of a malicious blue-stocking is like encouraging the gout because it keeps other ailments away. Of all the persons of my acquaintance, I think I have just parted with the two I dislike most."

"Yet Lady Mary has left behind her the reputation of a wit," I remarked.

"Oh, I am not surprised," replied Mr Walpole; "she amuses some people. When they cannot laugh at her sallies they can always laugh at *her*. But Lady Mary is well informed—far better than nine hundred and ninety-nine hundredths of her sex (or, for that matter, ours either)—what makes her ridiculous is that she is always straining for admiration. In a young woman, ostentation of learning is endurable, because youth and grace atone for almost anything; but an old woman brandishing her accomplishments in your face only intensifies the unloveliness of age. Then she is for ever imposing her company upon people far younger than herself, which is a common, but deplorable, weakness. I suppose no one ever carried with him into old age a stronger disposition towards the society of young people than I did; but I had enough sagacity to perceive that the presence of an aged person is to them as a draught of cold air

in a parlour—they are never at ease till it is shut out."

"At least you must give Lady Mary the credit of one service to her fellow-creatures," I persisted, feeling a little displeased at my companion's ill-natured speech; "she introduced inoculation for smallpox, did she not?"

"Ah, my dear sir, you have indeed reminded me of what I should be the last to forget, for no one could understand better the value of that invention. Yes; odious as I must ever regard Lady Mary's character, conduct, and conversation, let it be inscribed to her undying fame that she brought this blessing among our people. When I was young, what a state of society there was! Every man of position drenched his intellect with strong drink, every woman's beauty must run the gauntlet of the most loathsome of all diseases. Thank God! I lived to see a great change in both respects, and one-half of the improvement we owed to Lady Mary's importation. Yes, yes; give the devil his due and Lady Mary hers."

We had been moving during this conversation towards the South Room, where there was a dense throng of figures. I followed Mr Walpole to where half-a-dozen men were standing in earnest conversation. They opened out to welcome him, and here I felt indeed that I was with the immortals. A stoutish man with a plain calm face, and dressed in a russet cloak, first addressed my companion.

"Pray let us have the advantage of your opinion,

Mr Walpole: there is, I am sure, no one better able to give a sound decision on a question of literary taste."

*Walpole.* "Nay, Sir Joshua; but you are paying me a compliment that I have done nothing to deserve."

*Reynolds.* "Ay, ay; but we have long ago made up our minds on that point. Have we not, gentlemen?"

All expressed ready assent except one man of remarkable appearance. He was very stout, his brow and jaws were peculiarly heavy, and the flesh was rolled round his deep-set, twinkling eyes, so as almost to give him the look of blindness.

"Sir," he said, "I am always slow to make up my mind, and equally slow to change it."

*Rey.* "Well, the discussion arose thus: Mr Boswell expressed admiration for the poetry of Allan Ramsay, in which Dr Johnson could not agree. Now Mr Boswell very happily quoted some lines which seemed to me greatly to the credit of the poet."

*Johnson.* "Yes, sir, because he was a Scotchman; but they would not do credit to any one else."

*Boswell.* "I am sure, sir, you would not so often speak harshly of my country if you could realise how much I love it."

*Joh.* "Sir, if your country is so worthy of your love, none of us will interfere to prevent you returning to it—and staying there."

Dr Johnson shook with immoderate laughter at his

own joke, screwing up his rugged face and knocking the end of his cane on the floor.

*Bos.* (*seeming to relish, rather than to resent, the rebuff*). "Sir, we recognise in you such unerring judgment and discrimination that it will be the happiest day of my life when I shall convince you that the Scots are a noble race."

*Wal.* "Pray, sir, is there any difference between judgment and discrimination?"

*Bos.* "Perhaps as much, sir, as between common-sense and wisdom."

*Wal.* "Then I take it there is not much, for common-sense seems to me to be but the retail quantity of the stock-in-trade wisdom."

*Bos.* "Possibly, sir; but we are rash to interpret terms in the presence of the great lexicographer. Pray, sir, what is your opinion?"

*Joh.* "Why, this, sir; that I have lost all idea equally of your judgment or discrimination, wisdom or common-sense, since you chose to publish one of my letters without my leave."

*Bos.* "Pray, sir, consider how strong was the temptation."

*Joh.* "Sir, some characters are so weak that they find every temptation too strong."

I felt quite sorry for poor Mr Boswell, who persevered with singular ill success to restore his learned friend to good humour, and cut a very sorry figure in the attempt. Yet he seemed actually to enjoy it, looking round for our approbation at

each new sally of Johnson's, and I observed that from time to time he made pencil notes in a small book he carried.

*Bos.* "I am sorry we cannot conclude our discussion on Allan Ramsay's poetry, for here, I see, comes his son and namesake, the painter. Permit me to recall you to the subject of our conversation last night—the advantage of country over town life."

*Joh.* "Sir, I will waste none of my time in discussing paradox. Let's have no more on't; it is neither entertaining nor instructive."

*Bos.* "Relatively, perhaps, rural life is not so satisfying as life in the city; but abstractedly, I am convinced that it is preferable."

*Joh.* "Sir, I once knew a man who always wore a night-cap instead of a wig: abstractedly, the night-cap was the better head-gear, but relatively it was the worse; for when he would go abroad, the boys ran after him and hooted him."

*Bos.* "Well, sir, many a time I was in the humour to spend my life in the desert."

*Joh.* "Sir, none of your friends would have hindered your spending it in your native land; and there, an it pleased you, you might have laid aside both wig and night-cap and donned a fool's cap."

*Rey.* "I see you cannot forgive the Scotch, sir. At least they have one merit, they produce good gardeners."

*Joh.* "Yes, sir, because in that wretched climate nothing grows spontaneously. Even barley must be

sown in a greenhouse. Come, sir [to Boswell], let us be gone; I see one coming in whose company I am in no mind to be, still less to be exhibited by him as a laughing-stock on the stage."

I followed his glance and beheld one approaching dressed in a white coat and yellow waistcoat. Mr Walpole explained to me that this was Mr Foote, the actor, "the only man for whom that bear is terrified."

"Nay, sir," remarked one who had hitherto been silent, whom I recognised as Mr Oliver Goldsmith, "you do him injustice; that man has nothing of the bear but his hide."

*Rey.* "Well said, old friend! I would rather leave my character in your kindly keeping than with any one else of my acquaintance."

*Wal.* "I am not so amiable, gentlemen; I recognise the manners and the voice of the charming animal as well as the hide."

*Goldsmith.* "Surely, Mr Walpole, you cannot be blind to his excellent sense and charitable disposition."

*Wal.* "I admit them freely, sir; but that is no reason that his brutalities should be hailed as *bons mots*, or that one who has all the bigotry of a washerwoman should be hailed as a philosopher."

*Gold.* "It is a good sign of his nature that his friends are infinitely attached to him."

*Wal.* "'Tis to be regretted he does not make a better choice of them. That unhappy Scotchman

fawns like a spaniel the more he is belaboured, and absolutely revels in the ill-nature of his patron. *Il est bête comme celui qui a inventi la bêtise.*"

"Ah, Horace, my boy!" rang out a cheery voice behind us, "you keep excellent company, I am happy to see."

Turning round, we saw a gentleman in dark blue, with the ribbon and star of the Bath, with a pleasant jovial expression on his face, and leaning on the arm of one wearing a grey wig and a crimson coat, with ribbon and star of the Garter.

"Sir, I am delighted to see you are in good health," said Mr Walpole, with a respectful bow to the first; then, with another bow to him in crimson, "my Lord Chesterfield, your most obedient servant."

"Ha, Horace! I notice you cannot forget the conventionalities of our old world," replied he whom I recognised as Sir Robert Walpole, the father of my cicerone. "Health—egad! I am tempted to wish sometimes for a twinge of gout, to delude me into the idea that I still possessed flesh and bones. Look you, you dog! there are half a score of fine ladies hunting for you in the other room; your niece, the Duchess of Gloucester, especially commands your presence."

"I will wait upon her Royal Highness without delay, sir," replied Mr Walpole.

Lord Chesterfield turned his somewhat harsh face full upon the last speaker, with a kind of wistful look in his dark eyes, and, after gazing in silence for a moment, said—

"Young sir, forgive what might be impertinence in one nearer your own age. You possess that charm of manner which, it seems to me, the new generation disdain to cultivate."

"I can only account for it," Mr Walpole answered, with a frank smile, "by the fact that I have studied to acquire the good breeding of my father and his friends."

Lord Chesterfield sighed; Sir Robert gave us a careless nod, and as they moved on Mr Walpole led me swiftly towards the West Gallery, wherein the Royal personages were holding court. Was it possible, thought I to myself, that this rubicund, burly country gentleman was really the father of the sallow, dark-eyed, slightly limbed creature by my side![1] Never was there such a slight cast on the doctrine of heredity. Mr Walpole seemed to divine my thoughts, for, bending a penetrating glance upon me, he said—

"My father's exterior and mine are not very similar, are they? We resemble each other in this, at least, that I have carried into practice in private life the motto which continually ensured the success of his long administration—*quieta non movere.*"

"Who is that gentleman in blue coat and gold buttons, just entering the West Gallery?" I asked.

"What! you do not recognise *him!* My dear sir, he would be but ill pleased if he thought that possible.

[1] It was currently believed that Horace Walpole really owed his existence to Carr, Lord Hervey.

Fame (and port wine) are his daily—his only diet: that is Mr William Pitt. It would be folly to deny the ability of one who became Prime Minister at twenty-four; but, Lord! what a crop of discontent and disaster has been sown by his inexperience, vanity, and insolence. Saw you ever such a haughty countenance, such audacious disdain of his fellows?

> 'Pert without fire, without experience sage,
> Young with more art than Shelburne drew from age,
> With studied dignity and solemn state
> This young Octavius rises to debate,
> Nor county members think his speech too long,
> While words, like treacle, trickle from his tongue.'

Ah! but look you, sir, who comes behind him. That gentleman, I mean, in the murrey coat, unpowdered hair, and with those dark, strangely arched brows."

"Who is that?" I asked.

"The greatest that ever thumped the Treasury box; Charles James Fox, whose genius soars above the capacity of his rival as you may see the towers of Westminster Abbey overshadow the puny pile of St Margaret's Church. Look on him, my dear sir, for it is he that redeemed our Parliament from the humdrum of the Butes, the Norths, the Chathams, who, since my father's day, had grown round it as fungus collects on an aged oak. At his voice Liberty raised her drooping head—but I must beware of rhapsodising like Mr Boswell, or fulminating like Junius. By the by, I suppose no one ever reads the 'Letters of Junius' nowadays."

"Indeed they do, sir," I answered warmly; "they must ever remain splendid specimens of style."

"In our days," said Mr Walpole, "half their piquancy lay in the fact that no one knew who wrote them. It was really vastly diverting—every one in the Opposition with a grain of literary ability was in turn suspected; indeed, when I left the earth, five-and-twenty years after the appearance of the last of the letters, the controversy about their orthodoxy was still proceeding."

"It is not ended yet," I remarked.

"*Not ended yet!*" he exclaimed; "you don't mean to tell me the secret has never come out? Oh! this is an amazing piece of fun."

He was evidently very much tickled, rubbing his hands together, and chuckling gently.

"Then you know who was the real author?" I inquired eagerly.

"Know? of course I know; I thought all the world had either forgotten the letters or knew all about them by this time. Really, if you feel any curiosity about it, I do not see why I should not gratify it, for I fancy you are the only person within these walls to whom it is still a secret. Pardon me one moment, sir; I will return immediately and tell you all about the hoax, but I see her Royal Highness, my niece, expecting me."

Leaving me on the rack of impatience, he went up to a tall lady in white, with a scarlet mantle, standing near the door of the Presence Chamber. They spoke

together earnestly for some minutes, and then, even as I watched them, a shadow seemed to fill the space around me, the light dwindled, the figures melted away, the walls closed in once more, and I stood alone in the hall. Just then a clock struck three, and all became pitch-dark. I groped my way cautiously to a seat, and sat down to wait for morning.

It was maddening to think how near I had been to solve the riddle which has perplexed generations. Fool that I had been not to think of mentioning it sooner! Well, well, it could not be helped now: I had undergone a wonderful experience. I had been in the very presence of the departed; their voices still rang in my ears, the faint perfume of the ladies' dresses still floated in the air. Yet—must I confess it? the uppermost thought in my mind was one of delight that I was soon to return to the society of my living friends. My books—some, the works of those I had been with just now, others, those that told me of their lives—would be dearer to me than ever; but I had seen nothing in the men and women of the past to make me think them better than their descendants. History preserves what is memorable, excellent, or notorious in the departed; authors are always on their best behaviour; if they record what is commonplace, despicable, or dull, they are not read—that is all. The dust gathers undisturbed on volumes that contain nothing that is grand, witty, wicked, or romantic: we devour those that make the past seem nobler and more

gay than the present. But I had been a witness that human nature with periwigs, swords, and lace ruffles differs not at all from the same with chimney-pot hats and silk umbrellas, and I found myself muttering old Villon's line—

"Mieux vaut goujat debout qu'empereur enterré."

# A COUNTRY MEMBER'S MOAN.

THERE really seems to be some prospect of revolt against the tyranny which compels every head of a family who can wring out the needful expense to shut up the country home at the moment when the year is getting loveliest; to exchange the fragrance born of burgeoning tree and blossoming herb for the stale atmosphere of streets and squares, and instead of the untainted breath of the hillside or the coast, to inhale air already sucked into and expelled from myriad lungs.

When London, like a greedy leprosy eating away the beauty of vale and down, shall have grown to that scale, of which it lacks little even now; when the ceaseless Thames—

> "Like some huge giant weary of the load"—

shall fail in the task of purifying the millions of homes within his basin; when even the ocean's mightier gorge, rejecting the mountains of pollution that are

hourly thrust upon it, shall begin to fling back upon our shores the indigestible impurity that we try so hard to put decently out of sight—must we wait till *then* before our broad-acred squires awake to know that purer pleasures may be found among leafy woods and circling streams, among springing crops and twilight glens, than in the murky labyrinth of the city or the precarious verdure of the Park? And if, sooner or later, a reaction must set in against the way well-to-do people dispose of their seasons and the seasons of those dependent on them—will it come within our own time? or must we sadly forego the enjoyment of summer in the country, and while we creep sorrowfully along the shady side of the street, "babbling o' green fields," and panting like the hart after the water-brooks, reflect that at least our children will probably be wiser in their generation than we?

Speculations such as these may be born in the brain of a member of the still Imperial Parliament, as, an exile from his well-loved and tended woods and his distant stately hall, he wends his way some brilliant afternoon in July to take a part, whether silent or otherwise, in interminable wrangles in Committee of Supply, or listen to the never-ending plaint of that hopeless *femme incomprise*, Erin. But the despondency of this self-sacrificing senator has lately had a ray of hope flung across it. There are not wanting signs that the stolid patience of the well-to-do Briton is being undermined by a suspicion that he is not getting the best out of life; that, on the contrary, if

the procession of the seasons is an ordinance capable of ministering to the sweetness of existence and affecting the comfort with which the journey through life may be performed, we have got into the habit of doing things at the wrong time. As it was happily expressed lately by the Prime Minister, the natural forces are gaining strength which in August impel the young to go to Scotland and the old to Germany.

It was this suspicion that found expression in the vote recently [1] taken on Sir George Trevelyan's motion, that, "in the opinion of this House," the holidays should begin early in July, and that Parliament should reassemble in November to get through such gabble as cannot be overtaken in the first six months of the year; a motion which was only rejected by four votes in a House of 342 members. Nor can it be doubted that this minority would have become the majority had it been clearly understood among the supporters of the Government that the leader of the House, although voting for the *status quo*, was indifferent into which lobby his usual followers went. So bitterly has it been driven in upon the minds of members that to be kept in London till the golden sands of September are running through the vase, to watch the sunshine of a lost summer ebbing away, while blinds and shutters in the West End speak of the flight of happier mortals from the weary town—that all this is a penalty for which even the so-called sweets of office cannot compensate, and that relief

[1] In 1890.

from the bondage of routine must be sought and obtained.

London is eminently a city within doors; the open-air *cafés*, the *al fresco* concerts and dancing—essential features of every Southern town—are either totally wanting in our capital, or, at most, are timidly imitated, at precarious financial risk, in the exhibitions which of late years have been added to our list of crepuscular entertainments. It is obvious, then, that in such a city, where comfort can only be ensured behind plate-glass and within brick walls, winter is the time of all others for enjoyment of social pleasures, and that the proper season to revel in the verdure and tranquillity of the country must be before November gales have hurled the woodland into sodden ruin, while meadows are still deep with waving grass and gardens heavy with the perfume of roses. What a perverse arbitrament it is that shuts us up in sun-baked streets, until the angry autumnal sky, stooping low over the sloppy land, stints the sunless hours of daylight! Who that has felt the ineffable sweetness of June twilight, prolonged almost to meet the approaching dawn, rich with the fragrance of unnumbered flowers, musical with the tender sounds of a midsummer night—the hum of the chafer, the pipe of the plover, the nightingale's song, the corncrake's chastened discord, the sigh of the wind in the firs, or the murmur of waves upon the beach—who that has learned these delights will not blush when he finds himself wedged in a row of theatre-stalls, or seated at a superfluous

ball-supper? Who that knows them will not revive at the first signs of a release from the bondage our own perversity has imposed?

Of course, the objection obvious to every Englishman to a rearrangement of our London and country seasons is that winter is the time for sport; and this is true, in a great measure, so far as sport is limited in meaning to the destruction of wild or pseudo-wild animals. But even in this restricted sense it is only partially true. Fox-hunting (long may it flourish!) and pheasant-shooting (an innovation in its modern form) are exclusively autumnal and winter pastimes; but there remain the important sections of grouse and partridge shooting, salmon and trout fishing, and deer-stalking, not to mention such minor pursuits as otter-hunting and sea-fishing. If the term sport may be employed for recreation without bloodshed—yachting, racing, cricket contain capabilities of rural diversion not to be despised. Then the amazing development and popularity of golf in the South have admitted the Saxon to a source of enjoyment long confined to Caledonian circles. Suppose that Parliament in its wisdom were to resolve that, at any cost, adjournment were to be made in the middle or towards the end of July, that would mean a general exodus from London in that month. We are not concerned to examine how far such a resolve would expedite or retard the transaction of the business of legislation, or what the effect might be upon the Government of the day in depriving it of the long close time afforded by

the present system of adjourning, say, early in September, and reassembling in the middle of February. What we want to arrive at is an estimate of the addition to the enjoyment of living secured, under such an arrangement, to members of Parliament themselves, and to those who regulate their movements to and from the country more or less in conformity to the session.

First of all, then, there would be no interference with grouse or partridge shooting; nay, many permanent officials, as well as members of both Houses, who are now kept away from the moor or the stubble till an indefinite date of release on the rising of Parliament, would be free to make their engagements without regard to the success of obstruction. To such persons it would mean the gain of two months, beginning, say, on 15th July, and the loss of November and part of December and January. The deer forest and the salmon river would remain as open to them as at present; but from fox-hunting, save what may be undertaken from London, they would be practically debarred, and they could only take part in such battues as were arranged for October, before the long-tails are in strong feather, or were reserved for the fortnight's holiday at Christmas. Would this add to or diminish the sum of enjoyment? So far as Parliament represents the collective sense of the people concerned, it is almost certain that the next time a vote is taken on the question, it will be in favour of the change. Even in the highly artificial

state of society at which we have arrived, man retains the natural instincts of an open-air animal; he feels the impulse to be out in the sunshine, and to get into snug winter quarters; and sooner or later these instincts will assert themselves by increasing the summer holiday and diminishing that in winter. There will be much grumbling at the change; habits, especially vicious or stupid ones, are not easily broken; but the change will come.

The prospect is one to suggest a review of the capabilities of country houses as places of recreation, apart from the slaughter of pheasants and the pursuit of foxes. What manner of persons ought they to be who possess these palaces of pleasure that are scattered through the length and breadth of our fair island? how far do they fill the part of skilful and successful hosts? do they make the most of the dominion of which each of them is the prince? Perhaps in some respects it is hardly a fair time to ask these questions, when those who draw their incomes from land are still staggering from the anæmia of long years of falling rents and untilled farms; but we seem now to have entered upon a more prosperous period, in which many hospitable doors will be once more thrown open, though some of the old squires, too hardly hit to rise again, are forced to let their parks pass into the hands of those who have the needful means. New men and old acres are, sentimentally, a *mésalliance;* but let us make the best of the inevitable, and contribute, if possible, a few suggestions towards success in that highest, if most diffi-

cult, branch of hospitality, entertaining a party in a country house.

For, after all, the country *is* the place of holiday: radiance, space, colour, fragrance, silence broken only by sounds sweet in themselves, or softened by distance—it is with conditions such as these that most of us associate the idea of a holiday—a rest from competition, a well-won leisure.

How far do country houses, as we have them and know them, fulfil the requirements of recreation and repose? In respect of structure and appliances of comfort, the answer must be that, in general, they fulfil them admirably. It is very rare indeed, nowadays, that a guest suffers physical discomfort in the house of a landed host. Beds, baths, fire, food—the main necessaries of existence—are, as a rule, unexceptionable; although, perhaps, some discretion is necessary on the part of the guest in regard to one component of the last named of the four—namely, wine. There is more good wine made at the present than in any former period of the world's history, but, relatively to those who can afford it, there is many times less. For one cellar fifty years ago, there are fifty or a hundred now, owned by liberal, if uninstructed persons, who—their hospitable instincts outrunning their discrimination—they pour wine of high price and good vintage without stint before it has reached maturity. It may be safely asserted that three parts of the best wine is consumed before age has developed its virtue, mellowed its crudity, and

allowed the hurtful acids to be transformed into the beneficent and palatable ethers which constitute the charm of a fine wine.

Of another sort is the host who fondly imagines that all old wine must be good. Often it happens that the fathers have laid down what was originally good liquor, and by the self-same fluid—*quantum mutatus ab illo*—the children's teeth are set on edge. Who does not writhe at the recollection of a bottle of Madeira being passed round, specially recommended by the host as having been sent twice round the Cape "by my father, sir, and worth now a guinea a glass," but, alas! faded into an acrid liquid that it is hard to imagine ever flowed from the veins of the vine? Or perhaps a flask of Stygian hue is circulated—"'20 port, my boy; precious little of *that* going nowadays!" and you are bound to fill and refill your glass, wondering the while at the Pantagruelian palates of Georgian bucks, who were wont to slake their thirst with what suggests to your degenerate taste a compound of Harvey sauce and treacle. All the while Amphitryon, as he contemplates complacently the revolving decanters, is sipping the weak whisky-and-water to which he is limited by the advice of his physician; and you—the guest—just arrived from London to spend the Whitsun holidays in rural delights, are dying to be out in the garden where shaven lawns spread out so soft for wearied feet, and the twilight is wreathed with odours of honeysuckle and sweetbriar. It is in vain: the bonds of good

society restrain you; you must retain your seat and pass the bottle the prescribed number of times: coffee follows, and then you are invited to join the ladies, when, in fact, you are faint with desire to join the nightingales—with a cigar.

Discipline such as this (it is unvarying in the houses of some of the elder generation of squires) seems devised to neutralise the very colour and flavour of country life, and tempts one to exclaim that, after all, if such routine *must* be observed, it is less irksome in a town, where, if moon-rise cannot be enjoyed, it may at least be forgotten.

By the younger generation these rigours have been relaxed. Moonlight strolls are undertaken, while timely incense curls from the tip of the cigarette. If there is a lake or river, most likely there are well-appointed boats, more than one of which may be seen shooting from under the dark shore, bearing in its luxurious cushions a nymph who prattles gently to him who labours at the sculls. The sweetness of summer evenings are too well known by the young host and hostess to be neglected: the emancipated cit is admitted to joys to which, for many weary months, he has been a stranger. But, after return is made to the house, and the ladies have retired, he is inclined to murmur at the interminable *séance* in the billiard-room, with pipes and whisky-and-water. In vain he tries to slip away. The young host is one of those who seem to dread going to bed as they would going to the grave, and shrinks from being left alone. He

pleads for companionship in a way that it is hard to resist without rudeness; and it is perhaps nearly two in the morning before, having thoroughly exhausted the somewhat limited range of subjects on which the conversation has turned, the worn-out guest is allowed to blink his way up to his comfortable bed that has been so long ready for him, and he for it.

This habit of sitting late in the smoking-room precludes anything like early hours. The modern squire, as a rule, has discontinued the practice of family prayer, and breakfast is not on the table till a loose ten. Long before it is over the dew is off the grass, the air has lost that tingling freshness that flies with the morning prime, the shadows are shrinking to noonday measure —the natural day is half over. Such spendthrifts we are of the glorious summer solstice!

Yes; in fashionable or would-be fashionable houses, morning prayer is becoming a forgotten thing. Perhaps, as conducted by the ordinary British squire, it is impressive only from its extreme simplicity, and does not count for much in the æsthetic estimate of life in a country house—that with which we are exclusively concerned in the present observations. As a rule, it seems, guests are not expected to attend; at least, as a matter of fact they don't. Should a stray one perchance mistake the prayer-bell for the summons to breakfast, the master, in gaiters and homespun, looks uncomfortable or apologetic. If the house is a small one, probably the assembly takes place in the dining-room: the stranger diffidently sidles into a remote

chair, whence, being one of those reserved for servants, he is nervously beckoned by the lady of the house. Three, four, six, eight, nay, ten pairs of round young eyes have been known to be focussed on the unhappy intruder, as he deposits himself in a legitimate seat—a manœuvre not to be accomplished, if the schoolboy's holidays are on, without a titter that threatens to become an explosion.

Then the rightful occupants of the serried row of seats troop in, the women-servants first in rigid order of precedence, the rear being brought up by the men; the door is closed, and the ceremony begins.

When the late Bishop Wilberforce was asked to say grace at a private dinner-party, it is recorded that he demurred, on the ground that every man is the priest of his own house. That is a good reason for regretting that so few men read well; for in this respect they are far inferior to women. The average squire generally reads prayers as if labouring under just indignation. Often he is quite incoherent—blunders over punctuation, mangles the most familiar passages, and, in his nervousness, jangles the teacups. The reading of Scripture over, prayers begin. It is well if he confines himself to the noble language of the Church's confession and collects, even though he fires these off half defiantly, half timidly. Too often his wife, earnest for the welfare of his soul (which, when she first got hold of it, was in a sadly comatose condition), has put into his hands some collection of family prayers, the phraseology of which is almost oriental

in metaphor, abounding in abject imagery totally different from the simple words in which one of Teutonic race, left to himself, would frame a petition. It sounds strangely from the homely, stammering lips of the reader. One follows without fervour, and rises unrefreshed.

Let me present a sketch of morning prayer in which it was my privilege to join not long ago in a country house in the north of England. The young host and hostess were what is known as "smart" people, such as one might be slow to credit with thoughtful or reverent habits; nevertheless their practice was to conduct a simple service, which became not only a spiritual refreshment and a purifying influence, but a very notable feature in home life. It is true that the house was one of unusual beauty, — an Elizabethan hall with low, fretted ceilings carved oak panelling and latticed windows, opalescent with age and set with gem-like sparks of transparent heraldry. It is also true that the host and hostess were comely beyond the common—facts that undoubtedly made the impression more vivid and lasting. Still, the impression *was* made, and can never pass away.

A recess under the wide oak staircase had been railed off centuries ago, so as to form a little chapel; seats on either side, and a reading-desk at the end, provided for all being done decently and in order. On the morning in question the host was absent; his young wife read prayers. She was all in scarlet

—a *directoire* dress of scarlet. As she stood in the reading-desk, her bright figure relieved against the dark oak panels, and read the solemn words in clear, unfaltering accents, one could not but feel that if this little ceremony had been omitted, far more would have been lost to the day than the few minutes thus occupied. We cannot all live in picturesque old houses, we cannot all be beautiful, or (with advantage) wear scarlet *directoire* gowns; but we can at least be mindful to bring to the gathering of ourselves together for worship that measure of dignity and grace which is too often conspicuous by absence.

Turning from spiritual to carnal wants, it may be doubted if the prevailing arrangement of hours for meals permits the most to be made of the day either in town or country. Hereditary habit and the exigencies of field-sports apart, it is difficult to see any advantage that the normal British arrangement of breakfast from 9.30 onwards, luncheon (in dimensions a dinner) at two, five o'clock tea, and dinner at eight, possesses over the Continental practice of morning coffee and mid-day *déjeûner à la fourchette*. The scale of modern field-sports, and the thoroughness with which they are undertaken, of course render an important mid-day meal inconvenient, for no one seems to think it worth while to go out for less than a whole day's shooting; and hunting, carried on in short winter days, must be begun betimes. But if the change advocated by Sir George Trevelyan is carried out, country houses will become once more

places of summer resort, making it necessary to provide for guests other entertainment than shooting or hunting. This part of the question affects the classes rather than the masses, and the classes, Mr Gladstone informs us, are irremediably conservative. In spite of this, and with a full sense of the solemnity of the subject, we venture to submit the advantages which Continental hours seem to present when compared with those so rigidly adhered to here and now. At present the social day is bisected by luncheon, which, we maintain, has acquired a spurious and treacherous importance. Young men — (be it said that it is the prejudices of men only that require conciliation on this question, for women readily adapt their digestive organs to the most arbitrary arrangements)—young men rarely fail to do themselves justice at breakfast; but he who has arrived at or passed maturity (whenever that period may be fixed), especially one whose work lies in the town, is generally conscious of a coyness of appetite before mid-day. He recoils from the row of steaming side-dishes, and dallies with the toast-rack and the teapot. The result of this, under the influence of country air, is, that long before the luncheon-gong sounds he experiences a vacuum that requires to be considerately dealt with. He is already far hungrier than he feels in London before the principal meal of the day. If he gives rein to his appetite, he quite unfits himself for the employment of a hot afternoon. He may have undertaken to form one of a set of lawn tennis;

then certainly he will find himself indisposed to bound about a grassy court under a broiling sun. Still less will he feel inclined for horse exercise; and as for the expedition on wheels that may have been planned, driving in the open air is of all others the most soporific, and few tortures are more acute than those entailed by the effort to conquer sleep in a four-wheeled dog-cart. If, on the other hand, he limits his luncheon to the wing of a fowl and a single glass of claret, then long before dusk he will find his strength failing, and, succumbing to the meretricious seductions of the tea-table, he will jeopardise his digestion by indulgence in chocolate cakes and sugared buns, so rendering himself hopelessly unfit to approach that crown of virtuous living—a good dinner.

All these pitfalls would be escaped by the adoption of the more rational system. *Café au lait* or tea, with a fresh roll and fragrant butter, served in the dressing-room, disposes the mind and body to the transaction of such business as the post may bring to hand, to the study of the morning papers (which, in this ideal country house, must be brought to every guest with his hot water), or to a stroll in the park and gardens in the fresh morning air. No host intelligent enough to adopt the new system will dream of trying to entertain his guests in these morning hours. Let *them*, if they will, arrange morning walks between themselves, but let *him* beware, as he hopes for a benison, of yielding to that pride of proprietorship which tempts a man to show off his shorthorns, his horses,

his pointers, or what not. Nine hundred and ninety-nine people out of a thousand don't care twopence for other people's shorthorns, though they may all pretend out of politeness to do so, and the thousandth will find his own way to them, and be much happier going round them alone. The host's power to please will begin with the mid-day *déjeûner*. By that time the weather will have declared itself; he himself will not wear that preoccupied air born of "letters to write" or the "bailiff to see," which sits so ungracefully on an entertainer; his mind will be free to devise amusements for the party, whom the pretty, punctual, social meal will dispose to easy good-humour.

If this alteration of hours may be held promising of enhanced attractiveness to country-house life, how much more are they so for life in London! The marvel is that people have submitted so long to the present arrangement: but to touch on that would exceed the subject under immediate consideration.

Objection to reform may be heard on the score that Continental hours suit the Continental climate, and that English weather requires special arrangements to encounter it. Against this I must once more cite my own experience, and record the favourable impression of visits in two houses — one in the south of England, the other in the west of Scotland—where the modifications sketched above have been followed out with the pleasantest results.

There is, however, one point in the equipment of a

country house the importance of which is emphasised by the uncertainty of our weather — namely, the supply of books. Books should be everywhere—not only in the library, but on tables ready to every hand, and in bedroom shelves. No doubt, in the last-named place they are exposed to the risk of being packed accidentally in the portmanteau of the departing guest, but the butler or housekeeper would soon learn the duty of checking involuntary biblioklepts, and there is nothing adds so much to the air of comfort in a bedroom as a few well-chosen volumes. A sympathetic host or hostess may even pay a delicate deference to the visitor's tastes by the selection of a dozen tomes for his special solace. Yet in how few houses, comparatively, is any discrimination shown in literature, or facilities of access to it provided! Libraries there are, it is true, in most houses: in older houses it is often a subject of speculation what was the evanescent impulse under which, towards the close of the last and the beginning of this century, the shelves, now mellowed by time, were filled. To judge from the inevitable presence in such collections of 'Gil Blas,' 'Don Quixote,' Adam's 'Roman Antiquities,' Rollin's 'Ancient History,' Fénelon's 'Telemachus,' these works must have enjoyed a popularity with our great-grandfathers which was nothing short of prodigious. But among these common objects of the country gentleman's library there often lurk unsuspected treasures, and a wet afternoon may prove a godsend if it gives an

excuse for loitering among them. Too often, however, the library is also the master's sanctum, and even if you obtain permission to examine the books, you feel that you are on debatable ground. Books, to be enjoyed, must be as free as wayside ears of corn are to Eastern travellers.

"I am not ignorant," writes Robert Burton, ruefully enough, in his 'Anatomy of Melancholy,' "how barbarously and basely for the most part our ruder gentry esteem of Libraries & books, how they neglect & contemn so great a treasure, so inestimable a benefit, as *Æsop's* Cock did the Jewel he found in the dunghil; and all through error, ignorance, and want of education. And 'tis a wonder withal to observe how much they will vainly cast away in unnecessary expences, *quot modis pereant* (saith *Erasmus*) *magnatibus pecuniæ, quantum absumant alea, scorta, compotationes, profectiones non necessariæ, pompæ, bella quæsita, ambitio, colax, morio, ludio, &c.*, what in hawks, hounds, lawsuits, vain building, gurmundizing, drinking, sports, playes, pastimes, &c. . . . For my part, I pity these men, *stultos jubeo esse libenter;* let them go as they are, in the catalogue of *Ignoramus*."

Things are better now; still, to adopt the phraseology of Democritus junior, there should be no prescription, restriction, hindrance, bond, obligation, circumstance, or interference affecting access to books; they should be kept as handy as Sairey Gamp's bottle, so that the visitor may refresh himself as often and as soon as he feels "so dispoged." Not seldom a wayside snack of literature forms the initial of serious and fruitful study.

May it be hinted without ingratitude to the thoughtful housewives, to whom we owe the delightful freshness and brightness of country-house bedrooms, that there is still one point essential to comfort which it is the exception to find attended to: so small that allusion to it is inseparable from apology, yet bearing directly on the full enjoyment of books. Of all blameless pleasures, the consummation, some of us think, is to be found in reading in bed; not at night when the eyes are weary and should be trained to sleep, but in the morning when the white light streams through the casement, and the mind awakes alert and strong. It is then that, in the panoply of snowy sheets, the reader may have such communion with a fresh or favourite author as he can enjoy at no other hour of the twenty-four. He is in nobody's way, and nobody in his; the body is still at rest, and thought leaps lightly alongside of soaring thought. But too often, alas! a physical bar exists to the full enjoyment of this priceless hour. Ruthless hand and heedless head have arranged the bed with its foot towards the window, from which, unless shuttered and curtained (whereby waking on a summer morning in the country is shorn of all delight) the glare disturbs the slumberer betimes; the hand steals forth to seize the volume for which the head hungers, but, with the light in front, reading is impossible, sleep has been banished, and the hour that should afford a foretaste of paradise is wasted in discontented tossing. It is a crude idea of a bed that

destines it only for slumber in the dark; one of its main functions is to serve as a study in the daylight, and it should be so placed as to receive that daylight conveniently.

On the same subject of books may a word be added here, in the interest of visitors' servants, whose time, it may be suspected, sometimes hangs heavily enough on their hands. Does any one ever bestow a thought upon a supply of literature for them? A bookshelf is not a common feature in the servants' hall, yet the experiment of providing it seems worth a trial. Every great circulating library disposes at the close of each year of its surplus volumes: a few of the better of these, purchased at a trifling cost, and put in substantial bindings, would form the foundation of a lasting source of recreation to a class, the intellectual wants of which are only too apt to escape attention. It is hard to say after how many days, or in what manner, bread thus cast upon the waters may not be found.

No estimate of the resources of country-house life would be complete without alluding to the garden as it is, and as it might be. About thirty or thirty-five years ago a most destructive revolution overtook horticulture in this country, under which the contents of immemorial parterres were ruthlessly rooted out to make way for ribbon-borders and bedding-out—a system which secured a brilliant display in the autumn months, when the family had returned from their annual sojourn in the metropolis. The meas-

ured procession of bloom that delighted us as children, beginning with the scattered jewellery of early spring flowers, gaining volume and variety under April showers and May sunshine till it culminated in the glorious coruscation of midsummer, afterwards dying slowly in prismatic embers of decay until the white pall of December was drawn over the scene —all this patient pageant was dispersed by the imperious decree of fashion. Crown imperials and martagon lilies were swept out, or at best huddled into the kitchen-garden; the beds remained brown and bare for nine months in the year, in order that they might glare for the remaining three with fierce blue, yellow, and scarlet. English gardens, rich with all manner of tender association, were for the time ruined; clumps of hepatica and fritillary, of unmeasured age (for the life of some of the humble flowering-plants is not less enduring than that of the oak), were torn up and flung aside, to make way for "Mrs Pollock" geraniums and "Duchess of Omnium" calceolarias. The mania affected even the owners of cottage-plots; and "bedding-out," the effects of which are magnificent enough when managed skilfully on a princely scale, pervaded even the garden of the country rector and the village doctor. Happily a reaction has been in progress for some time: gardeners are now as keen to get an old-fashioned "herbaceous" as they were ten years ago to get a new lobelia; the uniformity that oppressed the weary eye in search of freshness and repose is giving way

to a method that will restore individuality and variety to the grounds of country houses. Once more the garden will become, to those who know how to enjoy it, a source of never-ending pleasure; once more, perhaps, we shall be allowed to return to it before its glory is dimmed by the dwindling days of autumn.

Who that has lagged wearily home along the flags on a July evening in London, what time the steam of approaching dinners steals from ten thousand areas, but has sickened to be free and far away? Who could then repeat without maddening impatience the little-known lines of the Scottish minister?—

"O western wind, so soft and low,
Long lingering by furze and fern,
Rise! from thy wings the languor throw,
And, by the marge of mountain tarn,
By rocky brook and lonely cairn,
Thy thousand bugles take, and blow
A wilder music up the fells.

. . . . . .

The west wind blows from Liddesdale,
And, as I sit between the springs
Of Bowmont and of Cayle,
To my half-listening ear it brings
All floating voices of the hill—
The hum of bees in heather-bells,
And bleatings from the distant fells,
The curlew's whistle far and shrill,
And babblings of the restless rill."

But in advocating summer as the only season in which perfect holiday may be made, and the full

joys of country-house life understood, it must not be thought that those of winter are regarded lightly.

> "Oh for the wood ! the moan of the wood,
> When the cold is waxing strong ;
> When the grey sod shrinks, and the dry wind bites,
> And about the tracks, like troubled sprites,
> The dead leaves whirl along."

The very contrast between the dreariness and dark without, and the warmth and light within, deepens the sense of comfort within the old walls. By day, the light that shines through streaming panes falls pleasantly on the volume, to the perusal of which one may give a whole morning; by night, the wind that shrieks about the chimney-tops and roars away over the woodland, only makes the log-fire burn the more merrily.

Far be it, also, from us to depreciate the merit of field-sports. Fondly does the memory linger round the mysterious candle-light breakfasts, the drive over plashy roads to the covert-side, the gleams of uncertain sunshine upon scarlet coats and snowy leathers, the note of hound, and twang of horn; nay, what heart that has once known the rapture is now so sluggish as not to stir as it recalls the piercing halloo, the glimpse of the fleet pack running almost mute across the open, the breathless struggle for a start, the priceless reward of having secured it. Neither, on a lower level, are the pleasures of the battue to be denied, when the knights of the trigger

muster beside the brown copse, and the woods re-echo to a cheery fusilade. But the pleasures of the few must yield in time to the necessities of the many. The millions multiply so fast within this island, that elbow-room for field-sports is becoming less every year. The time cannot be far distant when successful game-preserving and fox-hunting will be restricted to a few specially favoured districts; and, when these potent spells shall have been broken, who shall say that if half the year must be spent in London, it ought not to be the winter half? All the more reasonable will this seem when it is remembered that it is not only the happiness of people who can afford field-sports that is affected, but that that of a whole host of humbler folks is involved—parliamentary reporters, messengers in public offices, domestic servants, shop-keepers, and shop-assistants. All these, were they consulted, would affirm with one voice that a holiday, to be a holiday, must be had in summer.

One advantage, and one only, yet one not to be lightly set aside, must be claimed for the prevailing allotment of season between town and country, and it is this. It sends those who *can* help among those who *need* help at the time of year when help is most required. Were fashion to decree that the well-fed and warmly clothed should shut up their country homes in winter and repair to the town, there would be danger lest the helping hand will be wanting in the day of sorest need.

> "That out of sight is out of mind,
> Is true of most we leave behind ;
> For men that will not idlers be,
> Must lend their hearts to things they see."

Yet this is not the consideration that will guide the House of Commons next time it is called upon to declare when it will take its holiday.

# MANNERS.

"WE must be careful that all our looks be full of sweetness, kindness, and modesty, not affected and without grimaces; the carriage of the body decent, without extraordinary or apish gestures; in all our ordinary actions, be it in eating, drinking or the like, we must show modesty, and follow that which is most received, amongst those with whom we converse, for that courtier is but over punctual, who in a country gentleman's house will strictly practise all his forms of new breeding, and will not be content to express his thanks, and esteem to others in the same manner, and with the same ceremony that he receives the respect of others, his practice shows like a correction of the other, and oft puts the modest company into a bashful confusion, and constrained distrustful behaviour and conversation."

This sentence, of which the portentous length is rendered hardly less breathless by the arbitrary scattering of a few commas, is culled from a little brown volume in duodecimo, entitled 'THE ART OF COMPLAISANCE, OR THE *Means to oblige in Conversation*' (London, 1697). Such merit as flows from rarity belongs to this anony-

mous treatise, for it is mentioned neither in Lowndes, Allibone, nor in the later dictionary of Halkett and Laing. It is prefaced by a letter signed "*S. C.*" addressed "To his ingenious friend, Mr *W. B.*," and bears on the title the forbidding aphorism—"Qui nescit dissimulare nescit vivere"—(he who knows not how to dissemble, knows not how to live).

There is, however, nothing very sinister in the dissimulation prescribed by this seventeenth-century mentor: *il n'est pas si diable qu'il est noir.* He commends the self-restraint of a Chesterfield rather than the duplicity of a Machiavelli.

"The height of abilities," wrote the former authority in the course of his fruitless and pathetic endeavour to kindle his son's sluggish spirit, "is to have *volto sciolto* and *pensieri stretti*—that is, a frank, open, and ingenuous exterior, with a prudent and reserved interior; to be upon your guard, and yet by a seeming natural openness to put people off theirs."

This is very much the key of "S. C.'s" treatise, yet throughout it there breathes the spirit of a cruder age, when, to use the pregnant phrase of Mr Nichol (the biographer and shrewd analyst of Francis Bacon), it was as expedient to flatter monarchs as it now is to juggle mobs. The modern reader, running over the several chapters devoted to the principles of conversation at Court, with great men at "the Innes of Court, where are to be found a great number of the finest spirits," with ladies, and, lastly, with persons of all humours, ages, and conditions, will be rewarded by

many passages of charming *naïveté* and astonishing frankness; but he may find his smile tending to a sneer at the chapter on "How we must demean ourselves to gain the favour of our Prince or Soveraign." Princes and sovereigns are still held to be very proper objects of consideration, and those who please them best will not lose their reward; but it wounds our democratic self-respect to see the rules of the game set out in cold blood and black and white. *Ars est celare artem;* the taste of our age is too nice to brook having all the tricks of the trade revealed: it spoils the sport.

What possible approval can we lend to the conduct of "a reverend courtier who, being asked by what means he had lived so long and (was) so firm in favour at Court, answered that it was by patiently supporting injuries and by repaying thanks in lieu of revenge"? A mean creature, truly, yet our contempt for him in this nineteenth century may be somewhat chastened by recalling a remark of Bacon's, that "the lowest of all flattery is the flattery of the common people." (Tory democrats please copy.)

We may dismiss "S. C." with a single extract from his chapter on Conversation with Ladies:—

"It is necessary that a man who visits Ladies wear always good cloathes, even to magnificence, if he may do it without impairing his fortune: the expence we make in habits bears us through all,—as an ingenious man once said, it opens all doors to us and always procures us an obliging reception; and as the exteriour part, striking first the sight,

is that which makes the first impression on our spirits, doubtless we ought to take some care to render that impression favourable."

It is a common complaint among older people that manners have grievously deteriorated with the present generation. Perhaps it is so; but similar complaints have been uttered over every successive generation: there are always plenty to moan over all change as bitterly as if it were bloody revolution. Our contention is that changed as manners are there is still plenty of scope for consideration of others, which is the source of social sweetness. The eighteenth century abounded more in courtliness than does the nineteenth; it was more picturesque. There is less formality now both in dress and address than of yore, but the gulf that separates the well-bred from the ill-bred remains as deep and wide as ever. If we have not so many Sir Charles Grandisons, surely we have fewer Squire Westerns. Is it the refinement of a *fin de siècle* drawing-room a hundred years ago that would most impress one of us, could he be transported back to it? Change of manners and habits is inevitable, but it does not necessarily imply deterioration. To make a less distant comparison—what is more common in these days than to see a lady being driven alone in a hansom cab? Twenty years ago, in the days when many girls were prohibited from waltzing except with cousins, that would have been pronounced as compromising as going to a music-hall;

yet who will say that English girls of to-day are one whit less pure or lovable than their mothers were?

But if we are apt to pass harsh judgment on the manners of our own time, we are equally prone to sniff at any departure from the standard of to-day. There is a very suggestive passage in Mr Hamerton's interesting book, 'French and English.' That writer enjoys the enviable scope of being as much at home with the one nation as with the other: it gives him all the advantage possessed by one sitting astride of a high wall as against one standing on either side of it—he can see and compare objects on both sides.

"In any attempt," he says, "to judge of manners, especially in a foreign nation, we are liable to two mistakes. We are likely to think that a degree of polish inferior to our own is rudeness, whilst the refinement that surpasses ours is affectation, we ourselves having exactly that perfection of good breeding which is neither one nor the other. An Englishman is particularly liable to think in this way, because the present English ideal of good manners is a studied simplicity. We come to think that a simple manner is unaffected, whilst high polish must have been learned from the etiquette-book."

Between the African potentate who, in order to do honour to a distinguished visitor and to save him exertion, masticates gobbets of meat with his own royal grinders before placing them in his guest's mouth, and the Lancashire miner to whom the appearance of a stranger at once suggests "'eaving 'arf a brick at 'is 'ead," there is room to show almost every

degree of consideration. The conclusion to which one comes after studying any of the many writers who have tried to formulate rules of social procedure, from Epictetus down to the compiler of the latest manual on etiquette, is that there exists a *nescio quid*—a spirit, intangible, not to be described, but essential to the sweetness and light of human intercourse, without which "the rest is all but leather or prunella." Sweetness of manner has its source far too deep to be learned by practice or rote; it is no use trying to learn the trick of putting it on, like a grenadier's cap, to make one's self of consequence; it must be innate, for it is the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace—an instinctive consideration of the feelings of others, a forgetfulness of self. Courtliness is the counterfeit, often passing muster for the real thing; its success is commensurate with the success of the effort to please others. But, it may be urged, a man may be full of kindness and sympathy for others and yet fail to please because of his shyness. Well, shyness is of two kinds, the first and least deplorable being a gracelessness caused by unfamiliar surroundings and uncertainty how to behave. It produces agonies of misgiving and thought-dispelling perplexity. But, observe, this kind of sufferer is apprehensive, not of being laughed at, but of intruding on or being a bore to others. He dreads giving offence. Painful though it be, his is, if properly and timeously treated, a transient malady, and often leaves the convalescent more able to give and receive pleasure in

the society of others than many who have never suffered from the disease. The reason for this seeming paradox is that shyness of this kind is the result of a lively imagination acting on love of approbation, each of which is, in due measure, essential to a sympathetic nature. But it must not be neglected or encouraged by circumstances, or it will become chronic, and the torment will be lifelong.

The other and more malignant form of shyness is really nothing but pride, generating suspicious watchfulness and cold reserve, each of them fatal to a pleasant manner. You cannot give a sullen pool the sparkle and dash of a mountain stream, any more than Lord Chesterfield could pour his own light and grace into his son's dull nature. This conviction seems to have forced itself on the hapless father rather early in the celebrated letters; for we can almost hear the sigh with which, after writing repeatedly and at length upon the precepts of good behaviour, he flings down the pen with which he has traced these lines:—

"All the above-mentioned rules, however carefully you may observe them, will lose half their effect if unaccompanied by the Graces. . . . If your air and address are vulgar, awkward, and *gauche*, you may be esteemed indeed, if you have great intrinsic merit, but you will never please."

*You will never please!* It is a heavy sentence. How far must it be held a just one? How far is a man responsible for not having a good address? If our

contention is right, he is as responsible for not having natural sweetness as for being deficient in courage, honesty, continence, or any other natural virtue. But the punishment falls less heavily on the selfish man than on one for whom life without the friendly esteem of others, is worthless. Never please! never feel the firm clasp that betokens the answering warmth in a friend's heart, nor enjoy the genial glow that welds two equal spirits moving to the same goal; not even, it may be (though herein exist some different and perplexing considerations), exchange that exquisite flattery of preference between man and woman which is no small ingredient in the sweet draught of love. Never see faces look round brightly at the sound of your footfall, nor a circle open with glad acclaim on your approach; but, instead, mark the chill diffused among those into whose company you come—the constraint of remarks addressed to yourself compared with the ceaseless flow of talk among others. Never please! it is worth much study and much pains, if by study and pains the art of pleasing might be learnt; but to worry one's self over the rules without cultivating the virtue which is at the root of the whole matter, is so much study and pains thrown away.

There is, indeed, one constituent in the power to please which is beyond any one's control—namely, personal appearance. Comeliness, though not essential (for many plain-featured people are of the pleasantest), must be admitted to give an enormous advantage to its possessor. Herein is just one of those perplexing

inequalities which incline one to charge nature with injustice. Too little nose by the eighth part of an inch—too much eyelid by the hundredth—harshness in skin-texture, or irregular action of sebaceous glands —why are these, or accidents even more infinitesimal, suffered to rob a countenance of beauty? But on the whole the injustice is seldom as great as it seems. Proportionate intellect is rarely the complement of great personal beauty. The combination is so rare that, when it *does* take place, it explains the classical belief in demigods—creatures with mortal bodies and human passions, but suffused with the fire of divinity.

It is impossible to withhold sympathy from Lord Chesterfield in the fruitlessness of his patient endeavour to make his son brilliant or distinguished. Unfortunately, the inferiority of the offspring of great men is a common experience; it seems to be a law of heredity to which there are few exceptions that, while the sire transmits to the children his physical qualities, their mental capacity is proportionate to that of the mother. Hence it comes that though men of action are generally the sons of obscure fathers, there is nothing more rare than to find conspicuous ability in two successive generations. It may have been from observation of this circumstance that the ancient Pictish law was framed, which debarred sons from succeeding to their father's possessions. Brother succeeded brother, but otherwise "it is in right of mothers they succeed to sovereignty and all other successions." Another nation, more highly civilised than the Picts,

the Chinese, took precautions against hereditary honours falling into unworthy hands, for by their law of chivalry, it is said, it is, or was, the children who retrospectively ennoble their ancestry. A man rising to distinction among the Chinese would be offered the privilege of having his forefathers raised to the peerage, and they, being safely underground, might be trusted not to bring the honours into discredit. There is much to be said for this system, for, truly, a high-sounding title borne by a boor is like a jewel in a swine's snout.

The world is so full of men and women—fuller than it ever was before—that it is harder than ever for those anxious for a young man's career to believe that he can ensure success otherwise than by looking after his own interest. Some pushing fellow is sure to fill the place for which we have destined our son or friend's son if he wastes his chance in considering the welfare of others. Not so; this altruism I am advocating will so work on his personality that it will draw to him far more than he could have earned by selfish effort. As he travels on life's journey he will find himself surrounded by gracious looks and helping hands; even the most worldly will look kindly on one who never interferes with their pleasure or ambition, whose manner and temper are like a fragrant breath of mountain air. There is nothing mawkish in such a character; the self-sacrifice that moulds it implies resolution.

This one is in no degree akin to him of whom men

say, "He is no man's enemy but his own." Such a man may be easy, good-natured in the vulgar sense, and cheerful, but he occupies a place at the lower end of the scale of selfishness. If he is indulgent to others, he is so from indolence, and his ruin comes from indulging his own inclinations.

At the other end of the same scale stands ambition, which is only an exalted form of selfishness. This may seem a hard saying, but it will stand scrutiny. Of those who have attained high renown in history it may sometimes be hard to discern the leading motive; but to take the instance of two notable rivals—Napoleon and Wellington—the difference seems clear enough. The former, perhaps, was the more powerful mind, but it was intensely selfish. The indomitable will never turned aside out of consideration either for nations or individuals; the feelings, the sufferings of others were never glanced at in the ruthless march to the end in view: whereas the other, early steeped in the spirit of duty and subordination, grew to grandeur by means of insensible ascendancy over the wills of others, and finally triumphed by virtue of their devotion to and confidence in him. The memory of each differs as much in kind as the effects of their life-work. *Le petit caporal* was worshipped and feared, but men loved and adored the Iron Duke. Of the former, how few are the kindly human traits recorded! while of the other, to this day fresh proofs keep coming to light of simple sweetness dwelling long in the minds of men. The following anecdote concerning a

letter lately exhumed by the editor of a weekly paper may serve as one instance out of a thousand illustrating the sympathetic nature of the great commander. The letter, so far as my memory serves, was in some such terms as these :—

"Field-Marshal the Duke of Wellington begs to inform William Harris that his toad is alive and well."

It seems that the Duke, in the course of a country stroll, had come upon a little boy weeping bitterly over a toad. A strange trio they must have been—the lean, keen-eyed, old soldier, the flushed, sobbing boy, and, between them, the wrinkled reptile squatting, with tearless eyes and throbbing sides. The boy wept because he was going to school next day: he had come daily to feed his toad; the little heart was racked with grief because he feared his darling would be neglected when he was gone, and might starve. The Duke's heart was as soft as the boy's, for he undertook to see that the toad was looked after, and the letter above-quoted is one of the subsequent bulletins.

Montaigne pleads eloquently for the cultivation of sympathy :—

"Ie loüerais un âme à divers estages, qui sçache & se tendre & se desmonter : qui soit bien par tout où sa fortune la porte : qui puisse deuiser auec son voisin, de son bastiment, de sa chasse & de sa querelle : entretenir auec plaisir un charpentier & un iardinier. . . . Le conseil de Platon ne me plaist pas, de parler tousiours d'vn langage maistral à ses seruiteurs, san ieu, sans familiarité : soit enuers les

masles, soit enuers les femelles. Car, outre ma raison, il est inhumain & iniuste de faire tant valoir cette telle quelle prerogative de la fortune ; & les polices où il se souffre moins de disparité entre les valets et les maistres me semble plus equitables."

Peculiar piquancy and interest attached themselves in those days to conversation with a neighbour on the subject "de son bastiment et de sa querelle." Viewed in the light of events related in the anecdotes to be presently referred to, it is clear that not only æsthetic but defensive qualities were necessary for a satisfactory residence; and a disagreement with a neighbour who was supported by "followers very well mounted and armed, to the number of five-and-twenty or thirty," was one that invited discussion at considerable length and in some detail. In the four and a half centuries that have run their course since these lines were penned we have not done much, in England at least, to reduce the barrier between master and man. Many good, kind men would willingly converse more freely with their servants were the force of habit less binding: there is no *mauvaise honte* more oppressive than that which constrains such people to a silence which is attributed to haughtiness, and cannot indeed be removed from the category of imperfect manners.

But a still worse fault and a more frequent is the ignoring of the presence of servants. Things are said before them utterly regardless either of prudence or of the effect on their feelings and morals. People

converse at meals as freely as if the intelligent beings behind them in broadcloth or plush were deaf and dumb automata. It makes one shiver to think of the kind of thing that those who wait at any London dinner-party must overhear: the contrast between the freedom of conversation used *before* them, and the frigid sentences usually addressed *to* them must sometimes give them plenty of material for thought.

It is worth quoting the example of a man of the world. At a dinner-party in Voltaire's house a discussion took place one day on the existence of God, against which many arguments were pressed with much force. Suddenly the host ordered the servants out of the room, and, locking the door, "Proceed now, gentlemen," he said; "but I do not wish that my valet should cut my throat to-morrow morning."

Montaigne gives practical instances of the advantage of a pleasant countenance. He is so frankly egotist in discussing his own character, so little disposed to screen his vices or exalt his virtues, that one can easily believe a couple of anecdotes with which he illustrates his doctrine concerning a sweet manner. These contain, moreover, such lively pictures of incidents in the life of a French country gentleman of the fifteenth century, that perhaps no apology is needed for repeating them; but much of the aroma evaporates in rendering them out of the old French of the original.

He describes how a certain neighbour and relation of his own endeavoured to obtain possession of his house and person. Sitting one evening in his library, which he describes with much affectionate detail, perhaps composing one of his delightful essays, he was disturbed by a loud knocking at the gate of his chateau, which proceeded from this gentleman, who, seated on a horse ridden to a foam, loudly called for admission. He said he was flying from an enemy who had overtaken him in the neighbourhood, and "luy avoit merveilleusement chaussé les esperons" —had pressed him very hard. He also expressed himself as in great distress about his men, who had been scattered, and who, he feared, had been killed or captured. Montaigne threw open his gates and endeavoured *tout naifvement*, as he says, to comfort and refresh the knight. Soon after, the scattered following began to arrive by twos and threes to the number of five-and-twenty or thirty, all pretending to believe the enemy was at their heels. Then, *naif* though he was, the scholar-knight began to smell a rat—"ce mystère commenceoit à taster mon souspeçon." Nevertheless he acted up to his principles, was urbane and solicitous for their safety, stabled their panting horses, and admitted them all. Then ensued the triumph of a good manner over ferocity. The courtyard was full of armed men, the two gentlemen were regaling themselves in the hall. The grace with which the involuntary host dispensed hospitality, and the affable way he chatted to his reprehensible cousin over their bottle,

so won upon the latter's heart that he confessed his treachery, and gave up all idea of carrying it out. "Il se veit maistre de son entreprinse; et n'y restoit sur ce poinct que l'execution. Souvent depuis il a dict, car il ne craignoit pas de faire ce conte, que mon visage et ma franchise luy avoient arraché la trahison des poings."

The other instance given by the Seigneur savours less of "hamesucken" and more of knight-errantry. He tells us how he was journeying through a remarkably ticklish country ("par païs estrangement chatouilleux") when he found himself pursued by two or three parties of horse. On the third day one of these overtook him, and he was charged by fifteen or twenty gentlemen, followed by a band of ragamuffins. Overpowered by numbers, he was carried off into the forest, where his trunks were rifled and the horses of his men divided among his captors. Then ensued a wrangle about how he should be disposed of, which ended in Montaigne being mounted on a sorry jade and packed about his business. But he had not ridden off two or three musket-shots from the place before the charm began to work. The leader of the troop galloped after him "avecques paroles plus doulces," apologised for the inconvenience to which he had been put, made his knaves busy themselves in repacking his trunks, and set him on his own beast. He then raised his visor, made himself known, and assured his late captive that he owed his release entirely to the exquisite courtesy of his demeanour, which he had maintained

under such trying circumstances. "Me redict plusieurs fois que ie debvois cette delivrance à mon visage, liberté et fermeté de mes paroles, qui me rendoient indigne d'une telle mesadventure."

Then, with an unusual access of piety, this quaint writer concludes: "Il est possible que la bonté divine se voulut servir de ce vain instrument (his pleasant manner) pour ma conservation; elle me defendit encores l'endemain d'aultres pires embusches."

It would be ungenerous, especially after such a lapse of time, to attribute the change in manner and intent which the Seigneur credits to his personal charm and frankness, to the fact that his captors may have mistaken him for some one else, and released him on discovering their mistake.

Baron Holbach, writing to Diderot from England, declares himself disgusted with Englishmen, because you never see on their faces confidence, friendship, gaiety, sociability, but on every countenance the inscription, "What is there in common between me and you?" On the other hand, Horace Walpole returned the compliment, for he tells Selwyn in one of his letters from Paris that he cannot endure the philosophers, they are so overbearing and underbred. "I sometimes go to Baron d'Holbach's, but I have left off his dinners, as there was no bearing the authors and philosophers and savants, of which he has a pigeon-house full. . . . In short, nonsense for nonsense, I liked the Jesuits better than the philosophers."

No one can have mixed much with people in a humble rank of life without having marked the patient sweetness with which they meet a thousand aggravating and irritating discomforts, any one of which would be apt to put a well-to-do person out of humour. Just as the wayside dandelion, drawing filth of the gutter into its veins, filters it by its own virtue into a beneficent juice, so among the poor there are those who change the use of adversity and the humiliation of disease into a spirit that sweetens all their surroundings. Following the example of the Seigneur de Montaigne, I am tempted to describe an incident in my own everyday experience, which, however, unlike those of that illustrious writer, tells of the influence of the sweetness of others upon my own churlishness. It happened on a railway journey in the west of Scotland, on the Monday of Glasgow Fair; and whoever has experienced the vicissitudes of that anniversary must remember that it involves all the congestion, hurry, delay, discomfort, and ill-will of a dozen Bank Holidays in the South. I had important business to attend to in a distant town, and had to wait at a wayside station for an hour and a half beyond the time appointed for the train. When at last it appeared, every carriage was choked with excursionists; the observance of classes was annulled; first, second, third class—everything, even to the guard's van, was packed with holiday folk. Finally, I was fain, muttering impotent vengeance upon unhallowed directors, to squeeze into a

compartment already occupied by seven adults and two children. Though in a thoroughly bad temper, I could not but observe the suavity with which room was found for me by those already inconveniently crowded, and, of course, perfect strangers to me. Let any one who thinks this a trivial remark, try a similar experiment in a carriage filled with well-dressed pleasure-seekers, strangers to himself, bound, let us say, to Ascot races. He will not be inclined to repeat it. Gradually the contagion of good temper overcame my ill-humour. It was intensely hot, we were closely packed, and, to crown all, one of the children was taken violently ill. But nothing disturbed the equanimity of my fellow-travellers, nor the simple eagerness with which they noticed wayside objects and the incidents of the route. I parted company with them at the end of the journey, thoroughly penetrated with the lesson they had unconsciously administered, that sweetness of manner and consideration for others neutralise more than half of any discomfort we may be called on to endure. The poor are constantly in discomfort; their patience offers a reproachful contrast to the arrogance of the rich; and it is only by realising this that the first beatitude—that spoken to the "poor in spirit"—can be understood.

Conversation is an important part—though only a part—of satisfying intercourse. The necessity for saying *something* weighs grievously upon most of us at times, and drives us to say many things which

neither enrich nor adorn acquaintance. It is only among friends that periods of silence are endurable. The secret of interesting conversation is the same as that of literature — having something in the mind, something to say. Yet how few people seem to have minds furnished with anything but commonplace, or at least how few can produce acceptable fragments from a store of knowledge! Those who have devoted themselves arduously to intellectual work—specialists, in short, who know what work is—are often the pleasantest talkers; not by any means on their special subjects alone, but on anything that stirs the intellects of others, by the reflex sympathetic action of mind to mind. Many of us must have felt contact with a trained intellect to be the best refreshment after the gabble of "society." As Mr Hamerton says: "Severed from the vanities of the illusory, you will live with the realities of knowledge, as one who has quitted the painted scenery of the theatre to listen by the eternal ocean, or gaze at the granite hills."

It must, however, be confessed that it is often disappointing to meet with a brilliant writer, a renowned artist, or a distinguished scientist. Thrilled as we have often been by the accomplishments of such an one, it is vexatious to encounter in him tiresome tricks of manner, or perhaps to find him seeking relaxation from strain in those very trivialities from which we are anxious to escape. At other times he will sit silent while others' tongues are wagging. It is not the deepest streams that make the most noise.

Here is a scrap of conversation—practically it was monologue — echoed from a country-house smoking-room, where eight men of varied accomplishments were sitting. The speaker was a handsome young fellow, with a frank manner, a pleasant voice, and a fine out-of-doors complexion, who had just returned from a voyage round the world. The chief charm of conversation is that it should be spontaneous—that is, not careless, but without effort; but incessant prattle oppresses one with the idea that serious thought must either be still-born or strangled at birth, unless it is to be built up between the boards of a book, and so save other people the trouble of thinking for themselves. The Grand Tour of our days — a journey round the world—is often performed, and it is a common thing to meet with a young fellow just returned, ready enough to talk about it in his own way. How often one longs, on such occasions, for the enforcement of Condillac's precept — by taking trouble to speak with precision, one gains the habit of thinking rightly. For too often the narrative will be something like this:—

"Oh yes, I went with D., you know; a capital fellow to go globe-trotting with; d—d clever chap; knows a lot, doncha know; all about china and pottery and books and that sort of thing, doncha know. Knew the Taj the moment he saw it, you know. D—d if *I* should have known the blessed thing, you know; but bless you, *he* knew it in a minute. Oh, he showed me a lot. I give you my word of honour, when we got back to London I stopped the cab

in Trafalgar Square, and got out to look. I never knew there was anything there, you know; but D. had taught me to look about; and by —— I think it's as fine as anything we saw all the way round. Oh, travellin' teaches one a lot, you know, &c., &c."

Now this young gentleman most likely had received the immeasurable advantage of a first-rate education. He would, no doubt, if called on, have risked his life to save a friend, or shed the last drop of blood in his honest heart for his country. He will perhaps some day inherit a fair slice of the earth's crust, and be an example of the virtues and defects of an English squire. When the bright light shall have waned from his eyes, when anxiety and perplexity shall have graven their lines on his brow, when the charm of youth shall have melted away—what will remain? Alas! his prattle will no longer be endurable; he will be voted a bore; younger folk will get out of his way; his contemporaries will cling to him from habit, or because his cellar is stocked with choice wines, and his covers with plenty of pheasants. He will never earn that rarest of all distinctions, that of being a charming old man—one who, retaining the freshness of his natural faculties, imparts to others from his store of experience, and sympathises with the hopes, fears, wishes, and aims of young people.

> "I see these locks in silvery slips,
> This drooping gait, this altered size;
> But springtide blossoms on thy lips,
> And tears take sunshine from thine eyes."

Some people have the gift of pleasant deference in manner, which, though it may be acquired in some degree by study, is only secure of its effect when it arises from a sympathetic imagination. "My son," said Parmenio to Philotas, "make thyself small before Alexander: contrive for him now and then the pleasure of setting thee right, and remember it is only to thy seeming inferiority that thou wilt owe his friendship." This was the secret of the late Lord Beaconsfield's extraordinary influence over the minds of others, especially of younger men. In conversation with one he used to give him the impression that it was *his* opinion he most desired to have—*his* experience he most coveted; and this idea was not conveyed by any formal words, rather by expression of meaning eye and mobile lip—by manner rather than speech. Men are easily moved by this delicate flattery; they treasure up the words and traits of such an one, and dwell lovingly upon them in after-years, when, perhaps, he shall have passed away.

Nor men alone: women (though the rules regulating *their* preference transcend definition) respond gratefully to its influence. The mode alters, but the spirit remains the same. Raleigh's gold-laced cloak flung across the miry pavement would find no approval nowadays; the action would be felt to be as stagey as the embroidery: we have passed into a dim age of broadcloth and chimney-pot hats. In outward mien we differ from the courtiers of Elizabeth as widely as the man past middle age differs from the lad whose

photograph records what he once was. It is hard to believe the hair once clustered so low and thick on the brow now so bare—that the deeply graven cheeks were once so round and smooth. But the good-nature within will find expression in subtler ways. The late George Whyte-Melville, standing in a muddy street, was splashed from head to foot by a lady's carriage-and-pair suddenly pulled up beside the kerb. Hat, face, collar, coat, all were liberally bespattered; but almost before the lady could lean forward to express her concern, he exclaimed, "Ah, Mrs A——! I thought it *must* be you: you always have the best horses in London." This brings to mind a sentence in the 'Tatler': "A man endowed with great perfections without good breeding is like one who has his pockets full of gold, but wants change for his ordinary occasions." Yet if a man has store of gold he is seldom without plenty of small cash.

Mr Morley quotes from one of Diderot's letters a charming narrative of grace in the most difficult of all arts—the art of giving. He tells a correspondent how a friend of his had assisted a poor woman in a law-suit; she was successful, but her adversary decamped, and she got no advantage for the money it cost her, which she could ill afford. However, she came to thank her benefactor; and, as she sat with him, happened to pull out a battered old snuff-box, and scraped together the few grains it contained. "Ah!" exclaimed Diderot's friend, "you have no snuff; let me fill your box." He took it, crammed it with snuff, and slipped

in a couple of *louis d'or*, which he took care to bury out of sight. "Now, there," Diderot comments, "is an act after my own heart. Give, but, if you can, spare the poor the shame of holding out the hand."

Of all the weapons in the armoury of intercourse this sixth sense is the most potent: it implies at once the perfect temper of the metal and the consummate ornament of the hilt. There is yet another that can hardly be acquired, least of all by our own countrymen. If laughter is that which distinguishes men from beasts, a smile is the badge of their fellowship with angels. It cannot be put on, it must come from the heart; for affectation, always hateful, is more repellent in an artificial smile than in any other guise. Have we but the heart to smile in difficulty or disaster, how these will melt away before us; how angry men's brows will unfurl and fists unclench,—for we know instinctively that none but the gentle *can* smile, just as none but the churlish can scowl. Sons, look in your mothers' faces with a smile; brothers, in your sisters': let their memory of you when absent be of those who looked kindly on them; for, believe it, there is no pang more common, none more unquenchable, than the thought in after-years that we wounded our loved ones with sour looks, born of passing discontent.

Of these supreme signs of graciousness may be written the legend once inscribed behind a sculptured group of the Graces—

"Senza di noi ogni fatica è vana."

# CUSTOMS.

FROM time to time some senile dilettante awakes from his afternoon snooze, repeating to himself a nursery rhyme he babbled many decades ago, before he began the business of life. That business being now wellnigh at an end for him, he has retired from the fray, and has plenty of time for mild literary pursuits. He begins to think of the meaning of these childish rhymes running in his head; perhaps he cannot remember the exact words. Forthwith he writes to 'Notes and Queries,' and in due course his communication appears set forth (to his delight) under the title of "Folk-lore." It may be somewhat to the following effect:—

"FOLK-LORE.—In my childhood I was taught some verses which yet dwell (though somewhat imperfectly, I fear) in my memory. Feeling uncertain as to the precise words of the last line, and as I am positive that I used to hear identical verses repeated in other nurseries at the time, I venture to ask for a place in your columns for an inquiry on

this subject, in the hope that it may catch the eye of one of those who were children with me, and that he (or she!) may confirm or set right my version. The lines are as follows:

> 'Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,
> Humpty Dumpty got a great fall,
> All the king's horses and all the king's men
> Could not set Humpty Dumpty up again.'

My difficulty is this. The last line, as I have set it down, is defective in rhythm (the rhyme may pass). Can any one assist me to the right reading? FOGIUS ANTIQUUS."

The letter elicits many others; the discussion is sustained for several months, until it is proved to the satisfaction of all, except unlettered scoffers, that Humpty Dumpty was an Aryan hero whose fame is celebrated in many tongues, whose memory is preserved by many and curious customs among different nations. "Fogius antiquus" is as agreeably surprised as M. Jourdain was when he found that, without suspecting it, he had been talking prose all his life. It had never occurred to him that by his simple inquiry he should enter a province ticketed with the impressive title "Folk-lore."

Folk-lore is a field of liberal proportions, and the labour of those who till it is enlivened by many exciting discoveries; but in discussing certain customs in the following pages it is not proposed to deal with them in a scientific light: it is but the plain, every-day aspect of them, as they appear to an ordinary observer of men and women, that will be dealt with.

In 'L'Esprit,' the book with which Helvêtius astonished and disgusted the world, startling even Voltaire into passionate protest, he endeavoured to trace in self-love and self-interest the motive of every human action and virtue. To this source he also attributed national customs. "However stupid we may suppose the nations to be, it is certain that being enlightened by their own interests, it was not without intention that they adopted the customs that we find established among them. . . . Their most ridiculous, as well as their most cruel customs have always had for their foundation the real or seeming utility of the public good." There is some truth in this; at the same time, the principle by which some customs are rejected and others adhered to is less apparent than the original motive for adopting them. It might be supposed that man, being a reasoning creature — *Homo sapiens* as naturalists with some arrogance have classified him— would have acted with some intelligent discrimination in this matter. There is, however, little trace of any such influence; he has kept one and flung aside another, with little apparent regard to comfort, convenience, or decorum. Human beings, especially those of the gentler gender, being, on the whole, conservative, are generally loath to part with old customs, even those which are irksome or which have lost all significance among new surroundings. Yet are they so capricious that often they allow useful and convenient customs to fall into disuse, and retain those that serve no practical end.

Formerly, for example, it was usual for non-professional gentlemen, living in a town, to have brass plates bearing their names on their front doors. Only three survivals of this convenient practice linger in the writer's memory — two in London, at the Earl of Warwick's house in St James's and the Earl of Powis's in Berkeley Square, the third, till recently, in Edinburgh, at the Earl of Wemyss's old town house. When and why did this become discredited among what French novelists choose to write about as *le hig-life?* Any one who has rung at the wrong door in a London street must have winced before the aggrieved and dignified air of the six feet of broadcloth and plush whom he has disturbed in the study of the 'Morning Post.' Never, or hardly ever, do the servants in No. 100 know who lives in 99 or 101; and as for the residence of Mr Riser, Q.C., being known to the footman of Sir Gilbert Grandechose—why, the idea has only to be mentioned that its absurdity may be apparent. Whereas another custom which has neither utility, ornament, nor cleanliness to recommend it—that of causing servants in livery to load their heads with white powder—threatens to live as long as there are masters and men.

Another instance of putting down a good and convenient custom, and retaining one which, though harmless and picturesque, serves no useful end whatever, is found in that palace of paradox—the House of Commons. Until recently, so recently that Whips still living (and not only living, but retaining much of

that air—half statesman, half bookmaker—which is the accredited exterior of a Whip) shake their heads, and moan, "It never was so *dans le temps*,"—it used to be an honourable understanding between the two sides that no important division should be taken during the hours sacred to the principal meal of the day. Members were allowed to go home, dress, dine, and sip their claret leisurely, with the perfectly calm mind essential to digestion, and the certainty that if they were back by eleven o'clock, they were doing all that could be reasonably expected of them. All the Whip's concern was that enough members should remain to keep a House.

But it is far otherwise now; so much so, that one who entered Parliament not earlier than the general election of 1880 might be at a loss to account for the indignation of an honourable member for one of the northern counties of England, who, one evening lately, was stopped at the door by his Whip, and pressed to stay and dine. "Dine? dine HERE?" he exclaimed, as the flush rose to his brow. "I have been twenty years in this House, and I've never done *that* yet. I'm blanked if I begin now!" and out he marched. That understanding of mutual convenience is a thing of the past. Not only must the Government Whips keep a house, but they must keep a majority: there is a party of Irreconcilables who, gifted with enviable digestions and palates which, if not the reverse of fastidious, are subject to admirable discipline, never seem to leave the House, and are

always in watch to spring a division when it is at its lowest ebb. No Government has ever yet received a wound, much less a death-blow, during the dinner-hour; it is not possible that any Government ever will do so: herein, therefore, a return might surely be made to the older and better custom, with increased comfort all round, if the House of Commons would only act like thinking creatures. But perhaps that is too much to expect as things are.

Faithless to tradition as it has been in this respect, how tenaciously the House clings to it in others. Night after night, at the end of business, just as the Speaker leaves the chair, the doorkeeper's stentorian voice echoes through the lobby, "Who goes home?" A needless inquiry, it might seem to the thoughtful stranger in the gallery, who has been informed that beds are not provided on the premises for members, and observes that preparation is being made for turning out the lights. But that cry was full of meaning to members in the days when Westminster was separated from London by a fair slice of country. It has come down to us from a time when legislators made up little parties for mutual escort homewards, for there were those infesting the green fields and dark lanes—gentlemen with strong arms and supple fingers—for whom a Parliament man, short in the wind and round in the waist after the manner of his kind, would have proved a sorry match. The day may come—the last trappings of oligarchy having been swept away, the Lyon King-at-Arms having been done to death as

thoroughly as the griffin and the dodo, when hereditary pensions shall be remembered with the same chastened horror with which we now behold the instruments of torture in the Tower—when the stern Radical, seeking what he may devour, will sweep this ancient custom into limbo also. Meanwhile let us enjoy the faint flavour of romance that clings to it, even while wondering why other customs more useful should have been lost.

There is one observance in which we Britons have acquired a greater degree of freedom than probably was ever enjoyed at any previous stage of civilisation —namely, shaving. Yet even now shaving in prescribed limit is obligatory on certain callings. It is difficult to find any practical reason why domestic servants should be allowed to grow hair on the cheek, but not on the lip or chin; soldiers on the lip but not on the cheek or chin; sailors, again, if on the lip, then, compulsorily, on both cheek and chin.

The history of shaving is a very ancient one; it was practised in the New World before that was discovered by Europeans, for Torquemada sets our teeth on edge by describing how the Mexican barbers shaved their customers with flakes of obsidian (volcanic glass), each piece as it lost its edge being flung away and a new one applied. The latest instance of political significance in the mode of shaving must be fresh in the minds of many people. It was after the downfall of Napoleon III., when the French army ceased to be Imperial and became Republican, that a general order

was issued that all military chins were to be shaved, and forthwith the familiar and characteristic "imperial" disappeared from 500,000 chins.

For many years before the Crimean War, the moustache, in this country, was the distinguishing badge of the cavalry; it was prohibited in the infantry, and as for the civilian who braved public opinion by sporting it, he was looked on either as an artist, an eccentric, or as wishing to pass for a hussar. But shaving by regulation (little as it may be suspected by those who submit to it) has an origin more serious than mere caprice or love of uniformity. It is the badge of service; a survival of the primitive custom of mutilating slaves to prevent their escape, or ensure their recognition and recapture if they did escape. The Mosaic law made the mutilation more merciful than it probably had been previously. The proper mode of re-engaging a servant is set forth in Exodus xxi. 6: "Then his master shall bring him unto the judges: he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the doorpost; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him for ever."

As manners grew milder, even this slight mutilation was discarded, and shaving the beard or the head was resorted to for marking servants. Fierce and long was the controversy that raged in these islands during the sixth and seventh centuries, even to shedding of blood, as to the right manner in which priests—*servants* of the Lord—should shave their heads. At this distance of time there seems as much to be said

for St Columba's frontal tonsure—from ear to ear across the brow—as for that favoured at Rome, which eventually carried the day—the coronal, on the summit of the head. The Roman Catholic priesthood has not yielded to the lax practice of the age; indeed it is not many years since any Protestant clergyman of these islands, had he grown anything more than the orthodox "mutton-chops," would have forfeited the confidence of his entire flock.

Modish young men of the present day for the most part affect the tonsure described by Julius Cæsar as prevailing among the Celts of Britain when he first landed — that is, they shave everything except the upper lip; and, on the whole, if the human countenance as planned by nature is to be altered, this seems to be the most comely way of doing it.

Many attempts, more or less successful, have been made to distinguish man succinctly from other animals: he has been defined as a laughing, a cooking, a reading, a writing animal, but perhaps the speciality least likely to be begrudged him was that of a shaving animal. Alas for our exclusiveness! even that elaborate process no longer serves to differentiate us from the lower animals. Visitors to the Natural History Museum in South Kensington may see specimens of a pretty South American bird, the Motmot (*Motmotus braziliensis*), which, as soon as it comes to maturity, begins to trim with its bill the long feathers of its own tail, till, by clipping off the web, it brings them

to a uniform approved pattern, leaving a neat little oval tuft at the end of each.

When we reflect with satisfaction how far we have emancipated ourselves from the restraints of fashion in the matter of beards, does it not seem marvellous that we still endure the oppressive, though unwritten, law which constitutes the chimney-pot hat to be the only decorous head-dress for well-to-do male humanity? Woe! woe! æsthetic woe to the sons of men! who, having cast aside one after another the Phrygian cap, the furred *birrus*, the slashed bonnet, the knightly beaver, the three-cocked hat, and the feathered glengarry, have resolved that whosoever will enter good society must bind his brows with the gloomy cylinder of Lincoln & Bennett! None has a word to say in its favour; every one hates it and condemns it. In travelling, the hideous object has to be provided with a special case; yet for more than three generations it has been held indispensable to respectability. There is a cynical levity in the ribbon which still encircles its rigid circumference, recalling the happy days when a hat-band was a reality, used to adjust the flexible covering to the head. Odious as it is admitted to be, perhaps the most serious objection to it, from the point of view of taste, is the hindrance it presents to any tendency in our other garments to become more picturesque. Every visible article of outfit has to be brought down to the æsthetic level of the head-piece. A chimney-pot hat crowning a tasteful costume reduces it to ridicule.

Only the other day I received an agreeable morning visit from a French prior, dressed in the black and white garb of a canon-regular of the Order of St Benedict. It was pleasant to rest the eyes on a dress that has altered little or not at all since the days of the Crusades; and as he sat before my study fire sipping a glass of sherry, I felt as if I ought to apologise for not having the recipe for burnt sack or hippocras. Marry! my shooting suit of modern "mixture" seemed all too vulgar beside his classical raiment. But when he rose to go what disillusion awaited me, on finding that he had left in the hall an unmitigated chimney-pot hat, crowned with which his figure, as he retreated down the avenue, lost all its medieval grace.

If there is one point on which an Englishman preens himself, it is his personal cleanliness. In this respect he is prone to draw Pharisaic comparisons between the habits of his own and those of other nations. Yet our ablutions are much less elaborate than those of the ancients. The tub has taken the place of the bath. If it were possible for one of the Romans who garrisoned Britain in the third or fourth century to revisit it in the nineteenth, he would, of course, be amazed at the wealth and size of our cities, and the cleanliness of our streets, but he would not fail to be puzzled by the insignificance of the public baths therein, or even by their complete absence. Nor would the bathing arrangements in private houses strike him any more favourably. Imagine him paying

a visit in a large country house: how perplexed he would be to make use, unaided, of the tin saucer containing three or four inches of tepid water, the sole substitute for the luxurious *balnearia* of many chambers, which formed part of a Roman villa of any pretension. A sponge, a towel-horse, a lump of soap —the meagre accessories of the British tub—he would feel to be a barbarous exchange for what he had known of yore. Marble tanks through which flowed limpid streams heated to different temperatures, and often perfumed; silent-footed attendants to conduct the bather from one chamber to another; then the delightful lounge in the *tepidarium*, where his body was anointed and his hair dressed by light-fingered *unctores* and *aliptæ* (most charming fellows, who played on the muscles and joints, bringing them all into harmony—body-tuners, in fact); lastly, in the public baths, the pleasant loitering with those of his acquaintance in the porch and vestibules—for such accustomed pleasures he might long and look in vain.

As an institution the bath has passed completely away, though the Turkish *hammam* in Jermyn Street has its devotees. The people are clamouring now for free education; the citizens of Rome were kept in good humour by free baths. It is difficult to realise that, in a state of society where the limits of class were at least as sharply defined as in our own, the Patricians, even the Emperors themselves, resorted to the same baths as the lowest of the people. Among those who had leisure, it was no unusual thing to

bathe six or seven times a-day. The Emperor Commodus set the example of taking his meals on a floating table. Bathing, indeed, was only part of the attractions of the public baths; they were great social centres, where all the latest, freshest news was to be picked up. Here the latest lion might be seen, Juvenal's last satire laughed over, or the newest novel of Marius Maximus discussed. Here a brilliant young general, fresh from a successful campaign in Africa, might be sure of a degree of attention more flattering, because more discriminating, than the public ovation that was arranged for him in the streets on the morrow; or another, appointed to a command in distant, cloud-wrapt Caledonia, would receive condolence from his friends of both sexes on his approaching exile.

Of both sexes—for although in most establishments there were separate bathing-places for men and women, there was undoubtedly a great deal of promiscuous bathing. Anyhow, the galleries and palm-fringed courts afforded delightful resorts for conversation and flirtation, ideal shrines for "le petit dieu dont les yeux sont cachés et les fesses sont à découvert."

For good or for ill we have separated ablution from social intercourse; if we want the latter, we must take our chance in a form of entertainment utterly unknown in classical times; we shall have to squeeze up crowded staircases at midnight, elbow and jostle our way through an elbowing and jostling mob, and try to feel that being "in society" atones for all this

discomfort and condones the mockery of it. One looking at the two systems impartially might be tempted to the conclusion that, on the whole, we have not advanced in the science of pleasure; that a stroll in bath-costume (made as graceful or coquettish as you will) through marble halls "that echo to the tinkling rills," and leisurely conversation in the twilight of oleanders, is better fun than wrestling, broadcloth-clad, with a multitude gabbling at the top of their voices in a Cubitt-built house. One feels how delightful it would be just to arrange one London season on old Roman lines, to return to the old natural hours, instead of, as we do,

> "To make the sun a bauble without use
> Save for the fruits his heavenly beams produce;
> Through mere necessity to close our eyes
> Just when the larks and when the shepherds rise."

While regretting the loss of some customs which we have discarded and repining at the irksomeness of some that survive, we have reason to be grateful that things are not worse than they are. Mesmerisers and thought-readers established themselves among us some time ago, hypnotists are the latest vogue; but at least the law no longer allows that any woman who happens to be older, uglier, and cleverer than her neighbours may be called on to prove that she is not a witch under pain of being burnt alive. It makes us shudder to read of the atrocities perpetrated by witch-finders and witch-prickers among a fine race such as the Zulus, and we blush as we remember that not

many generations have passed since similar ignorant cruelty was permitted in this country. Not many years ago I knew an old woman in Scotland who had the reputation of being a witch, prided herself, and traded on it. Undoubtedly but for the protection of the law she would have received hurt from those who believed themselves injured in person or property by her spells. One Sunday I happened to pass her house, which was on a lonely part of the road, and stepped in to ask for a light for my cigar. She was sitting reading beside the fire and rose civilly to give me what I wanted, laying her spectacles across the open book. "After all," I thought, "she is not as bad as her reputation, or she would not be reading the Bible," and I looked to see what part of the Scripture she had been studying. Imagine my amusement and surprise to find that it was not a Bible at all, but a copy of Lord Chesterfield's 'Letters to his Son'! Now this old dame would infallibly have gone to the stake in the days of Queen Anne.

There are jealous husbands among us still; law and custom unite to give them due protection, which, combined with public opinion, has prevailed to suppress the frightful cruelty of certain precautions which, in primitive society, are sanctioned to ensure the fidelity of wives to their lords. It is said, for instance, that among some hill-tribes in India, it is the custom for a husband to cut off his wife's nose as soon as the honeymoon is over, so that her beauty may not attract inconvenient admiration. Among that people the cus-

tom is as closely associated with the marriage ceremony as that of the wedding-ring is among ourselves.

Talking of marriage and its accompanying observances, it is high time to protest against a silly exotic practice which has been allowed to fix itself in our country—namely, rice-throwing at weddings. Old shoes, if you will, though some people might be glad if these unlovely missiles were prohibited at what ought to be a picturesque and is a somewhat affecting moment; but if anything *must* be thrown, let it be old shoes, according to native tradition. Rice has no sanction in the annals of Christian weddings: it is a pitiful sight to see a bride and bridegroom screening their eyes to avoid the stinging grains; nor always successfully—for one instance, at least, remains in the memory, of a bridegroom who was laid up for weeks from the effects of a grain of rice in the eye.

Obviously, this is not a custom indigenous to Britain, though in the country of its origin it boasts a respectable antiquity, dating from about the year 1500 B.C., when a certain sorcerer, named Chao, was plotting against the life of a rival sorcerer, a young lady named Peachblossom. Peachblossom being betrothed to Chao's son, Chao fixed for the wedding a day when the Golden Pheasant, apparently a most truculent bird, was in the ascendant (whatever that may mean). He knew that at the moment the bride should enter the palanquin the spirit-bird would cleave her pretty head with his powerful beak. But

the art of Peachblossom was a match for that of Chao. Foreseeing everything, "when the wedding morning came she gave directions to have rice thrown out at the door, which the spirit-bird seeing, made haste to devour, and while his attention was thus occupied, Peachblossom stepped into the bridal chair and passed on her way unharmed. And now the ingenuous reader knows why he throws rice after the bride."

So says a writer in the *Chinese Times;* but venerable as the story is in the Flowery Land, there is not the faintest excuse for commemorating Chao and Peachblossom in Christian espousals. Perhaps of equal antiquity, but of far deeper pathos and significance, is the custom which once prevailed in certain parts of Scotland of including in the bride's *trousseau* a set of grave-clothes. Of such provision much might be made by the sombre genius of Pierre Lôti.

Having once opened the door to foreign customs in connection with our marriage ceremony, it is hard to say where the line should be drawn. There is a bewildering abundance and variety to choose from. One that prevails, or used to prevail (for it is said the missionaries have succeeded in making it unfashionable), in the New Hebrides would find unbounded favour with the disciples of Mrs Mona Caird. It is neither more nor less than the elevation of elopement into a national institution. In that land a girl used to have no choice in the matter of a husband; that was left in the hands of her parents or the chief of the tribe, who generally gave her to a bride-

groom much older than herself. What followed is described by Rev. Dr Inglis in his 'Bible Illustrations from the New Hebrides':—

"As a general rule she lived quietly with him, through fear, for five or six years, till she reached the full vigour of womanhood, when she showed that she had a will and power of her own. She then began to cast her eyes on some vigorous young man of her own age, of that class who could more than hold his own with her husband . . . they then eloped; a quarrel and sometimes a war ensued, if peace was not secured by a large present being given to the injured husband and his friends. After a year or two, longer or shorter, as the case might be, the woman would quarrel with her new husband, or he with her, and she would leave him and become the wife of a third husband. This was not an exceptional case; it was the normal state of society. When we came to know the people, we found in the district where we lived, that among the thirty or forty families nearest to us, there was scarcely a woman who had reached middle life to whom it might not have been said, as our Saviour said to the woman of Samaria, 'Thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband.' I knew one or two women who had had as many as ten husbands."

But our would-be emancipators of women must understand that before they can hope to establish this utopian state of things the male population must considerably outnumber the female, so that ladies shall be at a premium. In Aneityum, the metropolis of the New Hebrides, where this Art of Levanting prevails, it seems there used to be only sixty-five women to a hundred men, a result arrived at by a

national custom less romantic than universal elopement—namely, the strangulation of every wife on the death of her husband, and the slaughter of female infants. It seems, fortunately, as if these restless architects of new-fangled hearths have been born centuries too late to induce the world to try their experiment. Christianity, chivalry, and civilisation have prevailed to alter man's instinctive inquiry, "*Where* is a woman?" to "*What* is a woman?" to change his prayer from "Bring me a woman," to "Explain to me a woman."

Customs connected with so primary a want as food might be supposed to be enduring, and so they are in some respects, but in others they are constantly changing. Not to revert at present to the question of the best hours for meal-times it may be noticed that the mode of serving dinner has been revolutionised within the memory of most of us. "To put your legs under a friend's mahogany" is still a well-understood figure of speech, but, for all you know, in sitting down to dinner with him you may be putting them under plain deal. The phrase tells of a time before *dîner à la russe* had made the table-cloth a fixture, by removing the joints and other dishes to the side-table, and replacing them by barrow-loads of fruit, flowers, and sweetmeats, a revolution almost as complete as took place when the Gothic conquerors of Italy set the fashion of sitting at table instead of reclining in the Roman manner. Two country houses, and two

only, I have the privilege of visiting, where the carving is still done on the table; and after dinner, every movable having been lifted, the butler withdraws the cloth, and, with pardonable pride, reveals an expanse of mahogany—deeply, darkly, beautifully brown, with a surface like ice to the eye, and satin to the touch. It is probably its rarity that makes one appreciate this feature in the entertainment; but certainly, as the decanters slide noiselessly round in their silver trays, the claret seems to borrow a more silky seduction, the old sherry a more voluptuous glow, than they possess on dinner-tables *à la mode*. One thing is certain, that he is a sagacious host, who, instead of following sheeplike in the ruck of everyday entertainers, has the courage to retain some distinct feature like this. It is sure to dwell pleasantly in the minds of his guests, for it reminds them of times long gone by, which always seem brighter and dearer than the present. As M. Taine has observed, "Je veux bien croire qu'alors les choses n'étaient point plus belles qu'aujourd'hui; mais je suis sûr que les hommes les trouvaient plus belles."

There prevails in our dinner-parties a sad want of sense of the eternal fitness of things. The cookery is far better than might be expected from a nation that boasts thirty-six religions and only one sauce, but there is far too much of it, except for an epicure; and if you want to play the epicure, then the party should be small, and intent on the same purpose. The Romans of the decadence brought the art of dining to

the highest perfection. Their parties never exceeded nine in number: professed *gourmets*, they devoted themselves during dinner to the pleasures of the table; afterwards, when the body had been cared for, came the time for the exchange of such intellectual refreshment as might be had. This was rational. If one is to be sensual let it be set about in a business-like way. Under the present system we confound two things; we spend lavishly on the material part of the feast, and we arrange it as if it were possible to do it justice and amuse our neighbours at the same time. The moment when your spirit leaps to the knowledge that, in spite of the eleven chances to one against it in a leg of mutton, the gods have so ordered that upon *your* plate shall rest the succulent disc known as the "Pope's eye"—that moment, I say, is not one in which you find it agreeable to enter upon the merits of the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill with the county member's wife beside you. You feel that you must either swallow the delicate morsel with as little ceremony as if it were a piece of ordinary muscular tissue, or concentrate all your faculties on its deglutition. Nor, on the other hand, if by some harsh arbitrament of Fate you have been served with the wing of a woodcock, while an uninstructed creature at your elbow in tulle and moiré ribbons picks hesitatingly at the juicy thigh of the same bird, and allows all the savoury wealth of the trail to be carried untasted away, can you be expected to respond satisfactorily to the artless inquiry —"If you are fond of lawn-tennis?"

No. Business is business. The Romans acted wisely in so arranging as to attend to one thing at a time. By all means have large dinner-parties; but, by the shade of Lucullus! let there be more elasticity about them.

> "O weariness! beyond what asses feel
> Who tread the circuit of the cistern wheel;
> A dull rotation never at a stay,
> Yesterday's face twin image of to-day;
> While conversation, an exhausted stock,
> Grows weary as the clicking of the clock."

Thus groaned Cowper, and matters have not mended much since his day.

Of course there *are* dinner-parties, never large, that are as delightful as the overgrown feast is dismal; little intimate gatherings, where, amid shaded lights, well-cooked dishes, and well-ripened wines, the golden hours slip by all too fast. But if you want your hospitality to linger long and brightly in the memory of your guests, don't send a string of people down with the nicest attention to order of precedence, even to the dates of the creation of different baronets, ply them not with more dishes than any one ought to, or than most people can, eat—do not give them as much wine as they can walk away with, and withal expect them to be entertaining. Every one who is neither glutton nor dullard groans at the length and dulness of dinners; hence the recourse which has been had of late years to tobacco in the dining-room, saturated with which, and reek-

ing in every stitch of their garments, men condescend to spend a few minutes in the drawing-room with the ladies before the party breaks up.

There is room for a spirited change in this custom of dinner-parties—for a new departure on the part of some one in a good position and with a good cook. Suppose some lady who has a large London house, and who wishes to entertain, were to intimate that she is "at home," say from eight to eleven, and put *petits dîners* in the corner of her cards. Answers would of course be requested, and the number who would come could be calculated almost to a nicety. Then let the dining-room be set as for a ball-supper, with small tables laid with four or six covers each. Guests would arrive at different hours, the onus of precedence (totally out of place in a private house) would be dispensed with, little parties would arrange themselves at the several tables, and a delicate dinner be served to each. In this way, in a roomy house, it would be quite easy to entertain forty or fifty people in an evening, and the double triumph would be attained of breaking intolerable routine and making the guests enjoy themselves. At least the experiment is worth trying.

By the by, as we have got on the subject of dinners, how often one hears the title *cordon bleu* misapplied to a man-cook. It is exclusively appropriate to a woman, as may be seen from the following extract from the 'Almanach des Gourmands' (1830): "Si les gages d'un cuisinier, et surtout les habitudes de

l'artiste, vous le rendent trop dispendieux, bornez-vous au *cordon bleu.* Faites choix d'une *cuisinière* active, propre," &c. The origin of the distinction is well told by Abraham Hayward in his anonymous and lively work, 'The Art of Dining' (London, 1852). It appears that Louis XV. held the firm opinion that no woman could ever attain to the highest accomplishment in cookery. Madame Dubarry, resenting this as a slight upon her sex, resolved to convert him by stratagem. She caused a consummate supper to be prepared and served for the king in her rooms: the *menu* has been preserved to this day in evidence of the truth of the story. It was a complete success.

"'Who is this new *cuisinier* of yours?' exclaimed the monarch when this unparalleled succession of agreeable surprises was complete. 'Let me know his name, and let him henceforth form part of our royal household.' '*Allons donc*, la France!' retorted the delighted ex-*grisette*, 'have I caught you at last? It is no *cuisinier* at all, but a *cuisinière;* and I demand a recompense for her worthy both of her and your Majesty. Your royal bounty has made my negro, Zamore, governor of Luciennes, and I cannot accept less than a *cordon bleu* for my *cuisinière.*'"

Unluckily there is one link missing to complete the authenticity of this anecdote—the name of this great artist does not appear on the roll of the Order.

A brief reference to yet another custom and I have done. Grace before meat should never, under

any circumstances, be dispensed with, not only because of the high example set us in this matter and the unvarying Christian practice, but also because of historic association (though this is getting dangerously near the dread province of folk-lore). If any one is disposed to ask why gratitude should be shown by saying grace before taking food, any more than before putting on his clothes, or entering his house, or enjoying anything else that is as necessary to life as food, let him remember that man did not always live in such abundance as we do now; that his supplies were not always so secure, and that a meal in primitive times generally depended on his skill and luck in hunting and fishing. Can it be wondered, then, that a man who owed reverence to any divinity at all, fell, in very early ages, into the excellent habit of expressing the thanks he felt at sitting down to a good square meal? To clothes, for the most part, he was indifferent, they were an extra, and he could always fall back on paint; a house also might be dispensed with, so long as there were good caves; but food—that *must* be had. So it is an old and good custom saying grace, and must not be allowed to fall into disuse, even if we can find no better expression of it than that found in a manuscript volume of recipes, once the property of the rough-handed Sir Robert Grierson of Lag—

"O Lord, weir ay gangan and wer ay gettan,
We soud ay be comman to thee, but wer ay forgettan."

# CONTRAST.

PERHAPS there never was a question less creditable to the discernment of the mind which gave it birth than one lately propounded, Which is more essential to beauty, harmony or contrast? It is about as reasonable to ask, Which is longer, a mile or a month? or (to choose a more faithful illustration) to inquire, Which is more worthy of praise, virtue or honesty? Just as virtue exists not without honesty, so harmony implies the presence of contrast, the absence of which means monotony; and just as a character, in so far as it is honest, partakes of virtue, so contrast is indispensable to harmony, which is the essence of beauty.

But contrast means more than mere difference, and is generally somewhat loosely defined. The fine arts being the exponents of beauty, there is a tendency, in discussing its nature, to slide into the use of technical terms peculiar to the arts—a habit which, so far from tending to elucidate, only serves to confuse and con-

ceal sense. This inconvenience is increased when the expressions proper to one of the arts are applied to works in another. Thus the calculated eccentricity of a certain English painter has accustomed the public to the paradox of "symphonies" (that is, harmony of *sound*) in such and such colours; we read of pictures executed in a high or low "key" of colour; while, on the other hand, it is common for critics to praise one piece of music as "sparkling" or "brilliant" (that is, shining, reflecting much *light*), and to depreciate another as being deficient in "colour." Here is a paragraph from a musical review in the newspaper nearest at hand, published yesterday: "This suggestive subject was treated in most thoughtful and artistic fashion, shaded with pathos and tenderness, and developed into sentences of great character and brilliancy."

At what point is this licence of language to stop? As reporting becomes more and more realistic and personal, such piracy of phrase may be indefinitely extended. Thus we may have to read some day that "the right hon. gentleman resumed his seat amid a perfect panorama of applause. In the speech, which even political opponents must admit was a masterpiece, his well-known vigour of *impasto* was not permitted to interfere with sobriety of colour: the fingering in the intricate financial *obbligato* was a consummate piece of dexterity, and almost led the audience to imagine that two human instruments were sounding, — an illusion intensified when the

speaker permitted himself an occasional scumble of local allusion. The *staccato* was well marked, and led up with incisive effect to the stately *chiar' oscuro* of the peroration, which closed in a grand crash of harmony."

The Court journalist will revel in this linguistic elasticity: "Lady Lydia Fetterless wore a charming ballad in French grey, illustrated with delicate vignettes in pale-blue and pink ribbons. This simple but pleasing melody is the composition of Madame Mirliton of South Audley Street: and the diamond movement on the bosom and hair was admirably executed by her ladyship's *femme de chambre*, Mlle. Jane Schoking."

All this, if not mischievous, is unnecessary, for every art has by this time a complete terminology of its own; and although it would be pedantic to deny that occasionally a term borrowed from a single art has become indispensable to all, yet it is worth remarking that what is gained for the art which borrows is lost in definite meaning to that which lends. The word "tone," for example, is not only constantly used in painting, but in the compound "monotony" has extended far beyond the arts altogether; and the art of music has now no precise word to express the sound emitted by a stretched string, to define which the word "tone" was originally formed from the Greek τόνος—τείνειν, to stretch. In revenge, artists have laid claim to a monopoly in certain words, or exact, as it were, a royalty on their use, as if, which is not the case, such words had been devised by

them. Thus musicians have laid violent hands on the excellent words "harmony" and "discord." The filching of the latter word has been made easier by a supposed connection with a chord in music; but in fact the real meaning of concord and discord is a far wider one — namely, the union and jarring of *hearts.* As for "harmony," it is a Greek word meaning the joining of things fitly together, yet it has long ago become difficult to separate its use from the idea of melody. In the "Testament of Love" Chaucer says—

> "There is a melodye in heauen whiche clerkes clepen armony,"—

and one should be slow to grudge the clerks the use of such a well-chosen expression; but the fact that they have chosen well so to "clepe" melody should not be allowed to narrow the scope of the term proper to what is the chief element in all beauty.

These preliminary paragraphs have the object of making clear that contrast, discord, harmony, and such terms are not used here in the limited or technical sense in which they are often found, but in the essence of their own meaning.

Contrast is sometimes understood to imply suddenness or violence of opposition, but such is no essential part of its nature. Contrast consists in the balance of qualities—those which are absent in one part of a group, organism, scene, or work of art, being present in another part. In respect of suddenness, contrast

possesses every variety of degree: for instance, it is as much present when the full chord is struck as when the notes of it are sounded *arpeggio* or consecutively; as much in the grey dawn stealing slowly over the dark sky as in the blinding flash of lightning at mirk midnight. Each is part of that harmony, or fitting together, which carries out the scheme of beauty. Human beings, perhaps from impatience for sensation, seem unconsciously to prefer those passages in nature where the contact of extremes simplifies the contrast and makes it more vivid. The operation of this instinct sometimes brings about results resembling mere fickleness of fashion, due, however, less to a revolution in taste than to altered conditions. A curious instance of this is recorded in connection with a certain beautiful park on the Firth of Clyde, which was laid out by "Capability Brown," the great landscape-gardener. There is a steep hill in full view of the house, clothed with wood, save where a precipitous grey crag shows its impracticable front through the foliage. This shred of savage nature in the midst of peaceful greenery is a charming feature in the landscape; but it was not so regarded by Mr Brown, who, it is said, considered it a blemish, and urged that it should be painted green, so as to look like a grassy slope! Now, in Mr Brown's day, the surrounding country being all heather and rock, the artist's object in designing the park was to create a green oasis in the brown wilderness; hence his proposal, though in dubious taste even then, might be more plausibly

defended than now, when all the land for miles around is under cultivation, and the eye turns gratefully for relief to the hoary precipice.

The great charm of water in scenery consists in the wonderful contrast it affords to the solid earth. Your child strays from you in the grounds; if there is a brook or a pond in the demesne, it is there you will turn to look for him, and it is by the margin that he will assuredly be found. The same impulse prevails with grown people. The Londoner's idea of a holiday is to get to the seaside, where lands and waters meet. It would seem, indeed, as if absolute and sudden contrast were necessary to the highest beauty in landscape. The place where perfect scenery may most surely be looked for is where mountains rise from the plain. Artists know this well. It is not among the restless outlines and unquiet foregrounds of an Alpine valley that great subjects offer themselves. Studies there are in plenty, such as the deep-browed chalet with luscious warm hues among the timber joints and exquisite greys on the shingle roof; the copious crystal of the mill-stream dashing over the wheel, and hurrying away among the mossy boulders below. The grass is nowhere of so clear a green, nor set with flowers of such pure hues, as where the steep mountain lawn loses itself among the crowded pines. The effect of all this lavish colour and vibrating growth, this play of falling waters and comfort of securely built homestead, is enhanced by the motionless, colourless, inhospitable snow-field above. But to imbibe the magic

which transfers to a piece of canvas measured by inches that sense of space which is the true charm of landscape art, the painter must descend to a plain, such as that, for example, lying round the city of Turin. Here the level land, deeply farmed and set with ordered rows of trees garlanded with vines, spreads for miles to where, afar and widely on the north, rises sudden surge of many-crested Alps. Here is not merely the opposition of level plain to jagged horizon, of shadow of flying cloud to sunlit peaks, but something that rouses the fancy as well as excites the eye. Insensibly the mind compares the rich, busy, easily traversed plain with the impassable, barren solitude of the heights. So long as paint and canvas endure, generations after the hand that united them has mouldered into dust, so long will one beholding such a picture be thrilled by the eternal harmony of such a scene.

Every one deplores the lack of beauty and interest in contemporary portrait-painting, but allowance is not always made for the enormous difficulty to be encountered by our painters, seeing that far more than half the portraits executed in each year are those of men, and that never in the history of the world was the dress of the civilised male so hideous as it is among ourselves. The Chancellor of the Exchequer expressed this well in his speech at the Royal Academy banquet last year, when, in apologising to the artists for the humdrum and commonplace subjects supplied for representation by nineteenth-century civilisation, he said that the impression left on his mind by the portraits

in the Exhibition was that of "a blameless record of duties comfortably performed and of taxes punctually paid." It is doubtful if Adam and Eve, when, still acalypt, the necessity for some covering first dawned on their perplexed senses, can have endured such poignancy of shame as must overtake an educated man when he reflects that it is *his* example that has caused the Japanese to fling aside their delicately tinted silks and exquisite embroidery, and to don the odious envelope of a nineteenth-century European. The bombardment of the Parthenon was a more violent, but not a more vulgar outrage upon the beautiful. One is reminded of a burlesque called "The Happy Land," which was put on the stage some twenty years ago, and the whole town crowded to see. It was a bitter piece of satire on the administration of the day, and included such wicked caricatures of three of the principal Ministers, made up to the life, that the Lord Chamberlain interfered to prohibit the performance. One of the characters thus held up to ridicule was the late Mr Ayrton, then First Commissioner of Works. The Ministers were represented as transported into Paradise; the scene was aglow with lovely colour, which proving intolerable to the official mind of the First Commissioner, he promptly ordered everything to be painted "Government grey." It is perhaps not generally known that a monument of this policy remains to this day. The inner lobby of the House of Commons, which, whatever may be held to be the merits of the style, is at all events a consummate

example of our native Tudor architecture, has fretted walls of stonework and a wooden roof. Some difficulty was found in keeping this stonework clean, owing to the smoke from numerous gas-burners. Mr Ayrton settled the matter by ordering the whole of the walls to be painted stone-colour, and the roof yellowish brown, so that the effect now is exactly the same as if the whole affair was stucco and pasteboard!

Well, to return to portrait-painting. Broadcloth seems to have spread the same blight upon our canvas that coal-smoke has brought upon our scenery. Black garments did not prevail, it is true, to numb the consummate hand of such a master as Franz Hals; but in his day, at least, there was still some beauty in tailors' designs; even he might have felt daunted if, instead of trunk-hose, his subjects had concealed their lower limbs in shapeless tubes of cloth, and had crowned their persons, not with the broad-leaved beaver, but with the chimney-pot hat, or —*grande nefas et morte piandum*—the billycock.

There seems only one device (if one unskilled may speak and live) by which portraits of eminent males in this age may be conceived so as to earn such reverent contemplation from posterity as we freely bestow on the works of dead painters; only one plan suggests itself to cause our grandchildren to recall us as creatures more worshipful than smug railway directors or tobacco-consuming mole-catchers. Of these two ideals, the former is preferable; for when the reaction against broadcloth brings about, as it some-

times does, a resort to home-spun and suits of dittos, it is a sight to make the angels weep. It is nothing less than a broadcast insult—a posthumous affront—that a man should dare to transmit his portrait to generations to come, unless dressed in the best of his wardrobe. It is a profanation of the art of Tintoretto and Velasquez—of all the masters who rightly revelled in costly textures and glowing dyes—to employ it on coarse and common fabrics. Ugly as our "Sunday best" may be (and the gods know that nothing more unsightly could be devised!), let a protest be lodged in the name of all that is decorous against that ignoble horror of these latter days, the portrait of a country squire in shooting clothes. The doom is harsh indeed which deprives our eyes of the sight of well-turned legs now swaddled by fashion's decree in shapeless trousers; but more vicious than trousers is the knickerbocker, which wrongs proportion, distorts shape, and, in virtue of the material being, as a rule, ostentatiously common, carries an air of hilarious vulgarity, which in portraiture is wholly unendurable.

No: the day may yet be distant when our tailors find themselves "filled with wisdom of heart to work all manner of work of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, and in scarlet and fine linen;" but nothing is more likely to hasten the much-needed æsthetic revolution in men's attire than insisting that every one sitting to a painter shall wear the best clothes he has. Artists should be resolute in this matter; let

them patiently continue to depict the smugness of black frock-coats and sticking-plaster boots, for we shall never be converted if they fly for relief to rough fabrics and neutral tints.

What, then, is the device (consideration of which has been postponed to a spasm of honest indignation) by which the spirit of beauty is to be infused into portraits of the disfigured men of this day? Some means must be found to invest the "portrait of a gentleman" with effects more subtle than those yielded by a black waistcoat and a white shirt-front. Recourse must be had to the commonest, yet the noblest, of natural contrasts—that of the sexes: that balanced harmony of which the lion's mane, the pheasant's glittering neck—nay, humbler still, the perianth of the wayside weed—are as much a part as a man's beard or a woman's bosom. Thus, if the merit of two isolated portraits of husband and wife be represented by any value you choose to put on them, the merit of a picture in which these two portraits form a single composition is infinitely more than double that of either of them singly.

A remarkable instance of the delightful result of this use of contrast was to be seen in the winter exhibition of 1891 in Burlington House. It was a picture by the Spaniard, Francisco di Ribalta, representing the artist and his young wife, life-size. Francisco, who is fair, with light-brown hair, stands in a black dress, embroidered with the red cross of Santiago, showing a painting to his wife, who is seated, wearing a rich robe

with gold embroidery and white sleeves. She is exceedingly beautiful, very dark, with heavily fringed eyes and massive coils of hair, redeemed from absolute blackness by gleams of russet light. Through these coils has been elaborately plaited a white satin ribbon. Hardly could two individuals of similar age present a more striking contrast with each other—in attitude, in dress, in expression. The composition is a masterly example of the well-known device in heraldry called "counter-changing," by means of which brilliancy is obtained by the division of the field into two parts of different hues, those parts of the figure or principal charge which fell on the first being of the colour of the second, and *vice versâ*. The painter stands, fair-haired, grey-eyed, and darkly clothed, looking intently on the brilliant brunette in light-coloured raiment sitting at ease before him. One cannot help constructing a theory of the relations between these two. Ribalta seems to be waiting so wistfully for some expression of sympathy for his art—to be hungering for some word of approval or sagacious criticism. It must be confessed that she looks a little indifferently on the picture he is showing her. What might he not accomplish if he could excite in her something more than polite interest in his work? Will the fire slumber for ever in those languorous eyes, the fire he *used* to know how to waken not many summers ago—nay, that he *saw* glow so hotly only three nights since, as the young Count Fernandez whispered to her under the oleanders at the Duke's ball?

Three hundred years have rolled away since this canvas was painted, and still Francisco stands waiting, waiting for the light that is never to shine for him again. Admitted that this is all pure surmise (in this particular case it happens to be misleading surmise: there is nothing of revelation in it), the painter and his wife might have been the most humdrum of couples—he intent on pot-boilers, she wrapt up in narrow household cares, or the petty problems of millinery—yet there is something in the juxtaposition of the figures to stir the imagination as portraits in separate frames never could do. Herein is an echo of the eternal concord of marriage—man and the help-meet created for him, "the melodye in heauen whiche clerkes clepen armony"—not less thrilling because it is in the mournful minor key.

By the by, it is not more than just to Ribalta and his wife to end this allusion to them by explaining that they were very far from being either humdrum or dissatisfied with each other; on the contrary, their love-story ran on a high level of romance, as I discovered when, my interest in them being excited by the picture, I hunted up what is preserved of their history. It is not the least likely that the artist's wife ever showed indifference either towards him or his art, for she was herself the daughter of a painter, of whom the young Francisco became a pupil. He incurred his master's displeasure by falling in love and carrying on clandestinely with the lovely daughter. Love-making being peremptorily interdicted, the young

painter left the country and worked for three or four years in Italy. Coming home thence to Valencia, he strolled one day into his old master's studio, and finding an unfinished painting on the easel, coolly set to work to finish it. The old man, returning, was struck with admiration for the excellence of the unknown painter's work. "Ah!" he exclaimed, turning to his daughter, "here has been some one whom, if I could find him, I would gladly welcome as a son-in-law—an artist, indeed, very different from that idle dauber Ribalta." How wickedly those dark eyes must have flashed as the maiden explained to her sire the trap into which he had fallen!

Would that some of the many scores of couples who sit each year for their portraits would act on the lesson drawn from the Spanish painter's composition! the interest and beauty of family portraits would then be multiplied manifold. Instead of a series of persons obviously posed to be painted, hung at regular intervals upon the walls, we might enjoy a succession of realistic studies of bygone lives; husband and wife —lovers still—playing chess or piquet, or puzzling over their household bills; mother and daughter busy together in one of their countless common occupations —anything to escape from the dreary impression inseparable otherwise from a portrait-gallery, that of a waiting parlour, full of people showing no shred of interest in each other or anything else, condemned to be for ever dumb and idle.

With statuary the case is somewhat different. Here

colour is sacrificed to enhance the effect of form; there is nothing to confuse the eye in contemplation of the contrasts which abound in the ideal human body. Hence it comes that the most beautiful statues are those of single figures, and much of their fascination is owing to isolation—to the contrast of the white unchanging marble, raised above the eye level, with the crowd, chattering, whispering, perspiring, and elbowing through the gallery. It is not often that the presence of living human beings, and the incidents of modern life, serve to enhance the sentiment of a picture, yet it sometimes happens that this is so. Two such occasions occur to remembrance while these lines are being penned. The scene of the first was the picture-gallery at Bridgewater House, where the Conservative party assembled after their disastrous reverse at the polls in 1880 to take counsel with their chief, the late Earl of Beaconsfield. Midway between the two ends of the saloon hung a full-length Madonna by Murillo; it was immediately in front of and below this picture that the ex-Premier rose to address the assembly. Many of those present must have been struck by the singular group thus formed: the colouring of the man and effigy were one; the same brush might have laid the sallow flesh tints and painted the black raiment of each. The Virgin's pose —spreading her hands over the statesman's head and bending her mournful gaze upon him—seemed to express her concern in what concerned him, and there was little in the restrained gestures and passionless

expression of Disraeli to dissociate living flesh from simulacrum. But this unison served but to accentuate the contrast between the sorrow of Mater Dolorosa and the senator's anxiety for the fortunes of a political party.

The other example referred to occurred at the Royal Academy banquet last year. Those who have seen Mr Calderon's picture representing St Elizabeth of Hungary's great act of renunciation, can surely never forget the terrible scene depicted.[1] Light streams into a dark chapel from a narrow window behind an image of the crucified Christ, and falls on the shoulders of the Landgravine, who, having laid aside her garments in token of absolute abnegation of parents, children, friends, and everything else that endears itself in this world to our human nature, kneels clinging to the altar, her dainty head bowed low between her outstretched arms. Behind her, ill defined in the gloom of which he seems an embodied part, stands Conrad of Marburg, who devised and imposed this mortal sacrifice. Altogether the piece is one of unutterable anguish, only to be endured by virtue of unfaltering faith in the wickedness of the world, and the sure reward for those who have fortitude to cast away the good things of this life. Now for the contrast—the strange "uncanny" contrast—presented to all who had eyes to see. This weird picture hung immediately behind the gilded chair occupied by the President

[1] This paper was written before the wordy controversy about this picture arose, and I am careful not to enter upon the dispute now.

at the banquet. On his right and left sat Royal Highnesses, right honourables, men distinguished by birth, by position, or by achievement, and the feast proceeded with all the luxury that civilisation and wealth enables men to enjoy. As if to emphasise the princess's sacrifice by a living example of the pomp she was laying aside, there was drawn up, according to custom, behind the chairs of the principal guests, a line of scarlet-coated, epauletted, powdered lackeys, whose function is to stand still and do nothing while the company is served by less gorgeous attendants. Far be it from these lines to convey the lesson that stately hospitality is an evil thing in itself, or that a good dinner is to be avoided because there are many who have to go to bed without any dinner at all.

> "We hae meat, and we can eat,
> And sae—the Lord be thankit!"

But we are none of us any the worse, while we delight our souls with fatness, of being reminded that there have been those to whom the Word of God has proved sharper than any two-edged sword, "piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and body." Never was this lesson more poignantly brought home than in the manner described above: it was soothing to take counsel after it with an easy-going philosopher, and to hear what comfortable words Xavier de Maistre saith in this matter: "Et pourquoi (mon âme) refuserait-elle les jouissances qui sont éparses sur le chemin difficile de la vie? Elles sont si rares—si

clair-semées, qu'il faudrait être fou pour ne pas s'arrêter, se détourner même de son chemin, pour cueillir toutes celles qui sont à notre portée."

To return for a moment to the consideration of wherewithal we choose to clothe ourselves. In the art of dress the right use of contrast is as essential as in any other art, and by observing its laws it is possible to mitigate the evil effects wrought by the prevailing mode. One vital principle to be insisted on is, that no natural feature or limb should be so clothed as to seem a distortion. The chimney-pot hat is, in itself, about as ugly a device as could be conceived, yet it is better than the "billycock" for this reason—that by no illusion can one be betrayed into thinking that the head which it clothes is so shaped as to require that peculiar form of covering. Its lines are opposed to the lines of the human skull. But it is otherwise with the billycock: here we have a black dome like an exaggerated cranium, distending the form of the head beneath it in such a manner, that one landing from a distant planet among a Sunday mob in Hyde Park would imagine that he had come among a race of "swelled heads." The dress of women, which has passed through many beautiful phases of late, is liable to similar discordant treatment. Shoulders that by nature have a sweet and delicately modelled contour are suddenly concealed—nay, distorted—by hideous puffs, made to look less like freaks of millinery than swollen joints; and the waist—ah!

why will fashion not permit it to remain in appearance where it is in reality, just under the bosom, as Romney and Raeburn loved and knew so well how to depict?

Orators rarely speak as if they understood the value of contrast, perhaps because very few public speakers ever are at the pains to learn the rudiments of their art, but tumble haphazard into whatever style of speech they happen to be naturally inclined to. Hence the hums and haws which mar the listener's interest; hence the unrelieved flow of eulogy or invective, according to the subject. Montaigne tells us of the more æsthetic practice of the countrywomen of his own neighbourhood, who, when one of their number happened to lose her husband, used to assemble round the bereaved one, and, while recalling all his good and amiable qualities, enumerated also his imperfections. "De bien meillure grace encore que nous," he observes, "qui à la perte du premier cognu, nous piquons à luy prester des louanges nouelles et fausses; et à le faire tout autre, quand nous l'auons perdu de veuë, qu'il ne nous sembloit estre quand nous le voyions."

So it is in literature; the unrelieved gloom of such a work as Count Tolstoi's 'Kreutzer Sonata' defeats its proper aim, which is to depict the blackness of guilt. True, there is plenty of black used, but the absence of one brighter touch not only fails to give the full effect of darkness, but oppresses the senses with the intolerable sameness of denunciation. The effective moralist knows how to make use of tender

and humorous passages to bring out true pathos and rouse indignation against evil.

Unconsciously we derive much of the interest and pleasure of existence from the contrast between the past and the present. But, oddly enough, we invert the relation which would naturally be expected to present itself between them. The formula given by old-fashioned drawing-masters for composing a landscape was: "Distance—mystery; middle-distance—gloom; foreground—brilliancy;" and thus, not inaptly one would think, the scene of history might be summarised. The early tradition of our race lies dimly seen and nebulous on the horizon, merging into the shadows of superstitious ignorance of the dark ages, and light increases steadily and lies more brightly on the records of later times. After men have been toiling and scheming for so many ages to compass the comfort of their kind, and to store up riches and knowledge, it must surely be that life on this earth is lighter and brighter than of old. But it is notorious that few people will admit that to be so —none, indeed, except lovers and children, and they, being creatures not in full possession of reasoning powers, are hardly worth consideration. None, that is, that can get anybody to listen to what they say, so we need not take the prophets into account, for no one has ever paid more than passing heed to them. Even a remark on this subject by Solomon himself, the wisest of men, seems to have attracted no attention: "Say not thou, What is the cause that the

former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this."

"The good old times" hold their place well in the popular sentiment, in spite of all that can be proved against them in the matters of intolerance, violence, tyranny, cruelty, ignorance. We sigh with Hood's young lady:—

> "O days of old, O days of knights,
> Of tourneys and of tilts,
> When love was baulked, and valour stalked
> On high heroic stilts,
> Where are ye gone? Adventures cease,
> The world gets tame and flat,
> We've nothing now but New Police—
> There's no romance in that."

The fact is, that the past contributes beauty to history by contrast with the present. Men and women dimly recognise this, and attribute all the beauty to the past alone. It is not difficult to find an illustration of this. Acts—even crimes—that we should read of in the morning paper with horror or disgust as happening among ourselves, often lose their repulsive aspect after the actors have been long laid to rest. As Théophile Gautier observes: "Il se fait d'ailleurs d'étranges revirements dans les réputations, et les aureoles changent souvent de têtes. Après la mort, des fronts illuminés s'éteignent, des fronts obscurs s'allument. Pour les uns, la posterité—c'est la nuit; pour les autres—c'est l'aurore."

"Les aureoles changent souvent de têtes": for one

person who has heard of Elizabeth of Hungary, and been touched by the sorrow of her living sacrifice, thousands have mourned for the fate of Francesca da Rimini; yet the one, in renouncing her earthly crown, fulfilled the highest act of faith, and crucified the affections of the flesh, by yielding to which the other won for herself a place in undying story. Strange justice this! it will seem the stranger if we reflect on the relative judgment passed by contemporary opinion upon Father Damien, whose self-abnegation was as complete as St Elizabeth's, and the late leader of the Irish parliamentary party, whose undoing has been the same in kind as that of Paolo and Francesca. The first has won for himself unstinted eulogy—the other has been denounced as forfeiting all claim to that position among his colleagues which his talents had secured to him.

Less than a century is sometimes required to effect this regilding of tarnished fames. History owes much of its charm to the foibles of great men and the frailties of fair women: we hoard relics, the only value of which consists in their association with persons whose manner of life would exclude them from modern respectable society, and affectionately preserve even the garments of those, from contact with whom, were they to come among us again, we should bid our daughters draw aside their skirts lest they should be contaminated. Much of the love and regret that we bestow on the past are of the nature of rightful affection; but much is owing to the fact that it *is* past, and

is lavished on those things which, were they among us still, would be objects of distrust or contempt.

I have attempted to show that true contrast is indispensable to beauty, and therefore can never produce discord. Contrast, that is to say, as distinct from mere difference, for there are acts and qualities, of which the very nature exclude them from the scheme of beauty—of which the presence inevitably creates discord. These qualities are mainly two—stupidity and cruelty; perhaps if this pair were cast out, this would be such a sweet world that we should cease to look for a better one to come.

"Moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores." The presence of Lazarus at the gate of him who is clothed in purple and fine linen is no true contrast, it is a hideous discord — a loathsome taint in the existence of one who plans and pays for luxurious living, and neither plans nor pays for help to the poor. Is this stupidity or cruelty? Is the mind of Dives so lulled by comfort and dulled by an overfed carcass as to be incapable of realising the sufferings of Lazarus, or of perceiving what an ugly footnote his presence on the premises furnishes to the gorgeous text of the rich man's life? or does he actually derive pleasure from the evil contrast between his own ease and the beggar's misery? If the latter is sometimes the case, then it was only an extreme instance of what may be commonly observed, that the delight of possession is enhanced to base minds by the fact that

others have to go without. No man can eat his own weight in much less than six weeks: the motive that makes a rich man load his table with provisions far beyond the capacity of his guests (as is commonly done) is not hospitality but ostentation. A. has a dinner of six courses served, so B. is unhappy unless he can amaze his guests with one of seven. A. cannot afford six courses: B. accomplishes seven, and the only gratification he gets out of the feat is that he has done what A. has to deny himself.

But stupidity—inertness of intellect, either innate or acquired—is more likely to be the source of Dives's wickedness. Observe, it is neither the poverty and suffering of Lazarus that it is impossible to bring into harmony with the wealthy establishment; poverty and pain are necessary ingredients in many a beautiful composition. The rich man's gate should be the surest place for the poor man to go to for succour; his presence there completes the picture. The irreconcilable discord arises when his condition is uncared for, his wounds untended, except by the dogs. Sympathy is but the action of healthy imagination, causing one being to feel for and with another. Imagination itself depends on memory and experience; what we have never known we can only depict in our minds by comparison with what we have known. Those things which the eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, it has never entered into the heart of man to conceive, because they transcend his experience. We could imagine neither joy nor sorrow had we never smiled or wept; and it is

incredible to those who have not watched the process, how dwarfed or warped the imagination may become in one accustomed to have everything done and found for him; who has never known what it is to feel a want without the means of satisfying it. When the imagination is slow, stupidity is the result; when it is warped, cruelty: and it is the peculiarity of these two vices, that they are devoid even of that quality which permits the employment of other kinds of guilt as artistic material. Unlovely in themselves, they do not even by contrast enhance their corresponding virtues. Stupidity is of no service as a foil for wit and wisdom; cruelty adds no whit to the sweetness of mercy. Therefore it behoves every one who concerns himself with the harmony of this world to wage unrelenting war against these two "lothely worms."

It ought never to be forgotten that man is not naturally stupid: he has a reasonable soul, and, in modest recognition of that gift, naturalists have dubbed him *Homo sapiens.* There are born fools, of course, but these are abnormal cripples; the law is, *stultus fit, non nascitur*—the fool is made, not born. But it is otherwise with cruelty. There remains in every human character the core of a savage, vengeful nature, the heart of the predatory animal, dominated and in some degree concealed by Christianity (the one creed which softens men's hearts), civilisation, and education, but neither dominated nor concealed among certain races where these have had no sway. It may be asked of those whose habit it is to extol the past at the ex-

pense of the present, whether some progress has not been made in teaching men to be merciful not only to their fellows but also to the lower animals. A couple of centuries ago — the very heyday of the good old times—it seems hardly to have dawned on men's minds that the sufferings of brutes were worthy of serious consideration. Great scandal was caused when, in 1722, the Rev. James Granger preached a sermon against cruelty to animals, and printed it under the title of 'Apology for the Brute Creation, or Abuse of Animals censured.' His parishioners were indignant, and it is recorded that the mention of horses and dogs was resented as a prostitution of the dignity of the pulpit, and was thought to be a proof of the excellent man's insanity.

All honour to Mr Granger, and grateful honour to the men and women who work so diligently now to carry on the work he so well begun. There is plenty left for us all to do. Many cruel practices have been put down by law, and there prevails among most people such a degree of tender mercy towards their speechless fellow-creatures as would make Mr Granger's parishioners rub their eyes and wonder what kind of finikin folk we had become. But from time to time one gets a painful reminder that men are born cruel, and that mercy is a matter of education. Many a fair day is darkened by one witnessing a cruel act. Such was one of the first bright mornings of the laggard spring of 1891. On a common near London a couple of clowns were observed intently watching some object

in the grass. Four or five decently dressed people had been attracted to look on, and the curiosity of a passer-by having been excited, he also joined the group, only to witness a piece of brutality the recollection of which haunted him for many days. A lizard, than which there is no more shapely or harmless creature (with a pedigree, moreover, that puts to shame the proudest human families, for it is the heir of the mighty saurians of Pleiocene times), had come out to bask in the welcome sun. These trousered monsters had caught it and *cut it in two*, in order to watch the movements of the mutilated parts, and laughed (Lord! is there anything so cruel as laughter?) as the head and tail moved in different directions.

So these two, cruelty and stupidity, remain, the perpetual foes of sweetness and light, each an intolerable discord in the harmony of creation. The hatefulness of cruelty makes many people doubt the possibility of eternal punishment. They feel it impossible to believe that God would permit the existence of creatures whose whole occupation is to be the infliction of torment, or the resurrection of human beings to endure eternal anguish. Let any one who has visited, say, the marble-quarries of Carrara, and witnessed the life-long misery borne by the wretched oxen hauling the heavy blocks, doubt, if he can, that men are sometimes as relentlessly cruel as any devils. Nay, but there is worse than this and nearer home. The following ugly little vignette gives an awful glimpse into that hell which human beings create for each other in this life:—

"William ——, a labourer, was yesterday, at Cardiff Police Court, charged with murdering his wife. One witness said that he saw —— kick the woman twice in the back. She was then lying upon the floor, and cried, 'Oh, don't, Bill; I am gone.' Another witness stated that —— dragged his wife through the passage, holding her by the hands and rolling her over with his feet. He left her upon the pavement, and she died."

Alas! this is no isolated instance of savagery surviving centuries of civilisation. It was taken from the 'Standard' newspaper on the very day that these lines were penned. And now, on the very day that they are being revised for the printer, I cut the following paragraph from the 'Scotsman':—

"At the Liverpool Assizes yesterday, before Mr Justice Lawrance, Henry ——, aged forty-five, a collier, was indicted for the wilful murder of his wife, Margaret ——, at Ince, near Wigan. It appeared from the case for the prosecution that prisoner and his wife lodged with a Mrs Brown, and on the 21st November the three of them, together with a labourer named George Sturgeon, were drinking more or less all day. In the evening Mrs Brown went to bed, having previously alleged that the prisoner's wife had stolen a shawl. This charged seemed to have angered the prisoner, and shortly after the landlady retired he began to abuse his wife, and ultimately knocked her down, and began to kick her repeatedly with frightful violence about the head and body, finally making a 'running kick' at her, and inflicting a ghastly wound at the side of the head, which caused almost instant death. The prisoner had his clogs on at the time. The man Sturgeon was in the room during the whole time of the assault, and witnessed the

prisoner's brutality, but beyond remarking, 'You will kill the woman,' he did not do anything until the final kick was given, and then he went out and told the police. Sturgeon was called yesterday, and when asked the reason of his non-interference, he said it was not for him to step in between man and wife, but he informed the police and left them to settle the matter. The defence was that there was no evidence of premeditation to sustain the capital charge. The jury found the prisoner guilty of manslaughter, and his lordship, remarking it was manslaughter of the worst kind, sentenced him to twenty years' penal servitude."

It is, in truth, no delight in horrors that has made me preserve these mournful records, but a deep conviction of the fruitlessness of babbling about culture without realising the true nature of what we have to cultivate. It may be urged that these ruffians were under the influence of drink; quite so, but it is when the will is suspended by drunkenness that the fundamental nature of the animal reveals itself; a drunken brute is but the brute *plus* the fool, and the fact remains that this is the nature which every evangelist, politician, schoolmaster, or other agent of culture has to encounter and undertake to redeem. The result, however, is even more sickening when deliberate, systematic cruelty is inflicted by a person who cannot plead the miserable excuse of intoxication. It is only fair to that class to which the culprits referred to in the preceding paragraphs belonged, to admit sorrowfully that this horrid vice lingers in all ranks of life. Hell —on the severest evangelical plan—could scarcely be

imagined more intolerable than the anguish inflicted by the mother whom a jury lately recommended to mercy, because, though she had tortured all her children for years, and caused the death of one of them, they believed she had done so with a moral purpose —for the good of their souls!

Rationalist philosophers are never weary of declaiming against the theologist's doctrine of the innate depravity of human nature, but one need not be a theologian to read in lessons such as these that man is at bottom a savage beast.

"The stories," writes Mr John Morley, "of the American Archipelago, of Mexico, of Peru, . . . show how little power had been won by the Christian spirit over the rapacity, the lust, the bloody violence of natural man. They show what a superficial thing the professed religion of the ages of faith had been. . . . The doctrine of moral obligations towards the lower races had not yet taken its place in Europe, any more than the doctrine of our obligation to the lower animals, our ministers and companions, has yet taken its place among Spaniards and Italians."[1]

The misgiving must often be felt that much of the time and money we spend in afflicting young souls with compulsory education is not sheer waste. One result seems to be the rearing of children to aspirations far beyond the humble callings of their parents, and by so much to unfit them for lowly duties which must be exacted somewhere; but perhaps this is only the initial jar incident to novelty. The true end of

[1] Diderot and the Encyclopædists, ii. 223.

education is to equip the student, not to unfit him: surely toil may be lightened to the workman whose senses are trained to apprehend the scale of nature's contrasts, the mighty and grand—as in the contrast of continent with ocean, or floating cloud with massive mountain—as well as the small and exquisite, as in the bursting of scarlet flower from grey bulb, of tender leaf from harsh twig, or brilliant insect from dry chrysalis. There is no room for stupidity in the mind that has been wakened to this limitless harmony, and penetrated by the light of beauty, in which cruelty cannot exist, for it is the dark places of the earth that are the habitations of cruelty. There is plenty of needless suffering inflicted upon animals still; but any one who remembers agricultural life as it was five-and-twenty years ago, must have observed gratefully the greater consideration shown to work-horses and cattle by the present generation of farm-servants, especially in the northern part of this island. Scotland has for centuries led the van of education, and her people seem still to maintain that honourable place, inasmuch as they display in a greater degree than their southern fellow-subjects that sure token of true culture—gentleness to dumb animals.

# CIVILISATION.

'TIS very commonly said (perhaps no assertion is less likely to be disputed) that the age of miracles is past; yet the statement will hardly bear analysis, unless the word "miracle" is used only in a secondary and special sense. Dr Johnson defines it as "a wonder, an event contrary to the laws of nature"; but Professor Skeat, a later and stricter etymologist, only gives "a wonder, a prodigy"; and on turning to find his interpretation of "prodigy," lo! he can only explain it as "a portent, a wonder." Now, if a miracle is nothing more than something astonishing, something to excite wonder, surely the age of miracles is in full swing; surprises lie in wait for us round the corner of each new almanac. On the other hand, if we adopt Dr Johnson's alternative interpretation, the proposition is as unstable as ever, for the Doctor himself would assuredly have considered that to travel from London to Edinburgh in

eight hours would be "contrary to the laws of nature." During the whole history of the world, up to his time, the fastest locomotion on land had been by means of horses yoked to wheeled vehicles; imagination failed to surmise anything beyond what could be accomplished by the fleetest animals harnessed to the most perfect chariot. Sir Walter Scott was not deficient in imagination, but one has only to turn to the opening paragraphs of the 'Heart of Mid-Lothian' to recognise the author's conviction that travelling had been brought to perfection. When he wrote, "Perhaps the echoes of Ben Nevis may soon be awakened by the bugle, not of a warlike chieftain, but of the guard of a mail-coach," he evidently thought he was trespassing beyond the verge of probability; yet in a few months from now these echoes will resound to the clatter and roar of express trains, devouring the ground at the rate of fifty miles an hour. Could Sir Walter see this, what could he do but exclaim with one of his own creatures, "Prodigious"? To him it would appear a miracle.

But, considered as a mere achievement of human ingenuity and perseverance applying natural forces, it would not be miraculous in the special sense of the term. A genuine miracle must be an act or process transcending and independent of all natural law—an impossibility, in fact. For instance, there never was a time when the Irishman's aspiration to be in two places at once, "like a bird," could be fulfilled, for that would violate what we must recognise as a law

which no sane person would spend a single hour in studying to evade, that no single body can simultaneously occupy more than one *ubi*. There are doubtless laws in nature of which we know nothing, and therefore have not yet recognised; feats performed by means of these laws may seem to us miracles, but we have no right to call them supernatural because we cannot trace the action of the law.

There is no irreverence to Scripture involved in this assertion. We see through a glass darkly; we know in part. The Lawgiver reveals Himself to us by the action of His own laws, by us imperfectly understood; that action has in past times transcended or evaded the observation of those who witnessed certain events which we class as miracles, just as the possibility of travelling sixty miles an hour transcended the imagination of Sir Walter Scott, and just as the nature of the electric current has hitherto evaded definition by men of science: each of these phenomena are miracles in the sense that they justly excite our wonder, but not in the sense that they are supernatural. The firmer a man's faith in the unseen, the firmer must be his conviction that although there are many things superhuman, there is nothing supernatural. It is a redundant adjective; everything that exists is natural, for nature is omnipresent, and by its laws everything that is unnatural ceases to exist. The most striking miracle that can take place—the restoration of the dead to life—is not one whit more miraculous or beyond our powers than the origin of life itself or the

circulation of the blood. So long, therefore, as there remain unfathomed mysteries such as these, so long the age of miracles endures.

Looking back along the road travelled by human beings in what we conceitedly call the March of Civilisation, what a blundering, crooked track it is! how much shorter the journey might have been made! How deeply the ground is trampled where frequent conflicts have taken place! how many mighty barriers, thrown across it by lawgivers, ecclesiastics, warriors, may still be traced by their crumbling ruins! "That which we call progress," observes Mr Leslie Stephen, "is for the most part a process of finding the right path by tumbling into every ditch on each side of the way." Can it be claimed that our course even now is less staggering and blindfold than heretofore? Consider, for instance, the precautions taken for the physical development of the human race. It is possible that in after-ages our posterity will look back with amazement to the nineteenth century, when people in the van of civilisation freely devoted mind and means to developing the most capable strains of domestic animals, and were content to leave the perpetuation of their own species to utterly random haphazard. The mighty Clydesdale dray-horse, the racer with lungs and legs enabling him to outstrip the hurricane, and the shaggy little Shetland, are members of identically the same species: in the two first, qualities latent in the original animal have been developed by thoughtful selection of parents, and, in

the last, have had to manifest themselves only in the degree permitted by an inclement climate and scanty food. Were the same discretion and control exercised in the preliminaries of human matrimony, instead of leaving them all to the guidance of a proverbially blind little god or the calculations of mercenary prudence, what physical and intellectual miracles might not follow! Each succeeding generation might excel the last in symmetry, beauty of countenance, the use of all the senses duly balanced by intellectual qualities. Gentlemen there might then be—not classified as such on account of their balance at the banker's or the superficial trick of caste, but because they would be *gentle* in the strict sense—*i.e.*, men of birth—till in time a mongrel would be as out of place in human society as it is now in a pack of fox-hounds. Disappointment, of course, might be expected in the earlier stages of the system. The offspring of an alliance carefully selected to produce a race of coal-heavers might conceive an invincible desire to become a Court florist, or one destined to excel as a musician be possessed with an irrational impulse to be a member of Parliament; but firm and scientific administration might be relied on to eradicate these eccentricities in time. Some people may be disposed to think the present Government have allowed a great opportunity to go past when they constituted a Department of Agriculture by Act of Parliament, instead of setting up a Ministry of Matrimony. However, this is a hazardous subject: it is rather of what civilisation *has* done for

us than of what it might have done, or may do, that it is intended to treat in this paper.

To resume the metaphor of a march (for which I am in no degree responsible)—one looking back over the line of it may descry in the distance certain races that seem hardly yet to have started, and he is perhaps puzzled to account for their laggardness. Arithmetic is the simplest of the three R's, as well as the most indispensable in anything like business, yet there are primitive races whose language fails to define any proportion beyond duality. Some of the Australasian tribes reckon up to two and no more — everything beyond that being comprised in a word meaning "plenty." The West Australians have advanced a little further, and by means of counting their fingers and toes, and (in the higher standards) other people's fingers and toes, may be considered quite ready reckoners. One of these, wishing to express "fifteen," would say, "*Marh-jin-belli-belli-gudjir-jina-bang-ga*"—that is, "a hand on either side and half the feet."[1] The Tonga Islanders are a long way further on, for they not only can count up to 100,000, but have given proof of a highly developed sense of humour. They got bored by the French explorer Labillardière, who "pressed them further, and obtained numerals up to 1000 billions, which were duly printed, but proved on later examination to be partly nonsense words and partly indelicate expressions; so that the supposed series of high numerals forms at once a little vocab-

[1] Primitive Culture, by Professor E. Tylor, vol. i. chap. vii.

ulary of Tonga indecency, and a warning as to the probable results of taking down unchecked answers from question-worried savages."

Think what a vast interval of education a mind in this primitive state has to traverse before it can apprehend the bare existence of the legion numerals handled by mathematicians, let alone handling them himself. Talk of miracles! Herein is one far worthier of wonder than the Indian juggler's magic mango, that the dwarfish intellect whose reckoning power fails to apprehend definitely more than "we two"—everything over that being an unnumbered crowd—can be trained to grasp even the elementary measurements of science, such as that of the velocity of light, and, thus trained, comprehend the magnitude involved in the fact that the rays which left the star Aldebaran Beta 50,000 years ago are only just reaching the earth now, though they have been travelling hither through the intervening space at the rate of 180,000 miles a second ever since. To cause the warm blood to course again through dead veins, or to change water into wine, are more sudden, but scarcely more wonder-stirring feats than wakening the dormant faculties of the mind or turning ignorance into knowledge.

Ages ago a Phœnician merchant, ingenious beyond his fellows, and overwhelmed by the increasing multitude and complexity of his transactions, devised a series of symbols by means of which, scratched on tablets of baked clay, he was enabled to exchange information with traders at a distance. "Behold,

how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" What a blaze of illumination may be traced to that uncertain spark! A faculty took its birth therefrom, second only in importance to articulate speech. Hitherto intercourse in absence had been as impossible as it is now for a man to be simultaneously in more than one place. Henceforth distance in space and time were alike set at naught; the wall of Pyramus was penetrated; the king's sign-manual commanded obeisance in the uttermost parts of his realm; lovers' flames were fanned even when their whispers were hushed by distance; and, marvel of marvels, men being dead yet spoke in their own words to countless unborn generations. A man must be in love — a woman must be a mother — before either can realise the full value of letters. There are some who never find themselves in either of these conditions—to whom perhaps correspondence has been so watered down by frequency and by the added importunity of telegrams, that they have come to look on the post-bag as an irksome incident, like shaving. And all of us (lovers and mothers excepted, *bien entendu*) have suffered indolence to interfere with intercourse by letter. Lord Byron wrote letters not amiss, yet even he willingly shirked putting pen to paper. "No letters to-day," he notes in his journal; "so much the better — no answers." We are prone to assume that the age of correspondence, like that of miracles, has passed away; if that is so, it has happened through our own neglect. Letters

are but written conversation: bright, natural conversation is the outward and visible sign of friendship; and bright, natural letters are as delightful and as highly valued as ever—only we are too lazy to write them. Yet what loads of leisure some people have! How few of the young men (young women must be credited with plenty of industry in correspondence) who loll away rainy hours in country houses over the pages of sporting and society papers ever think of taking up a pen to exchange thoughts with distant friends! Let us pry into the correspondence of a member of this envied class, taking care to fix on one who is heart-whole, untrammelled by engagement with any fair — for, of course, the mind of the enamoured male is abnormally active, and drives the quill far and fast.

It is perhaps the afternoon of Sunday, often a period of self-reproach by reason of the seductions of luncheon all too generous. The golden youth rises from before the fire, yawns, stretches himself, and, asking his host what time the post goes out, straddles off to the smoking-room, observing that he has a lot of letters to write. This young gentleman has received an education costly beyond the wildest dreams of the medieval student: he is one on whom thousands of pounds have been lavished to give him the standing of a scholar; he has means enough to make him absolute disposer of his own time, and is of such station in life where a considerable degree of mental culture may be expected. Here

are surely the head and the hand to bring the Phœnician's invention to consummate fruit. Learning and leisure, with all the luxurious appliances of a wealthy country house at their command, hampered by no irritating defect of circumstance—mind will commune with mind; and as as we prepare to look over his shoulder, we anticipate a real intellectual treat.

Drawing a sheet of exquisite smoothness from the stand, and dipping a new grey-goose quill in a silver fox-head inkstand, the scribe pauses, biting the feather of the pen and gazing with a far-off look out of the window. His eye wanders over the soaked lawn, which was once the cloister garth of an ancient religious house. Even so in olden days may a monk, wearied with the task of illuminating a psalter, have rested his eyes on the same emerald sward. To tell the truth, our friend is puzzled to remember the day of the month, though that happens to be displayed in large black figures in a frame on the mantelpiece. The mental effort seems too much for him, for, laying down his pen, he pulls out a morocco-leather cigar-case; and it is not till he has a fine regalia under way that he begins a letter

To his Sister.

"Carol Priory Soppingham,
*Sunday.*

"Dear Polly,—Please tell the governor I shall arrive on Tuesday by the 5.15, and will he send a trap for me. Raining like anything.—Yours, Bob."

Evidently he reserves the confidence, always so facile and full between brother and sister, for their early meeting.

Before beginning the next letter, some minutes are devoted to reflection and calculation, aided by the aromatic incense of Havannah. Ah! he is now going to commit to some intimate friend choice thoughts from that well-shaped, capable head. But no; the letter is

To the Secretary, Army and Navy Co-operative Society, Victoria Street, S.W.

"Captain de Crespigny, No. 1,291,065," (shade of the great Crusader! what think you of your direct descendant having to certify his identity by a number like a convict's?) "requests that 1000 c. f. E.C. cartridges, No. 6 shot, may be sent to him at Hieover Hall, Huntingfield."

The third and last is going to be *the* letter to admit us to the writer's mind, for it is

To his Friend.

"Dear Old Man,—You wanted to know what we did here. Friday — Cockshot Wood, 5 guns, 720 pheas., 213 hares, 30 rab., 2 woodcock, 18 various; total, 1083. Saturday—Bangover Covers, 105 pheasants, 65 part., 19 hares, 573 rabb., 10 woodcock, 2 various; total, 774. Weather blagard [*sic*], powder straightish. We don't shoot to-morrow; there's a

rotten cattle-show or something. I'm off on Tuesday —home. Haven't seen you for an age. I don't suppose we shall meet till about the Derby. Take care of your life.—Yours ever,

"Bob de Crespigny."

Alas! it seems as if the cheapness of correspondence has brought upon it the proverbial corollary. Yet this is an age of copious, if not fastidious, reading. It is still recognised as a duty to society to make one's self as agreeable as may be in conversation. It would therefore seem worth the little extra trouble involved to make a letter as attractive as a paragraph in an evening paper. If it were once realised that it is as much a breach of good manners to write slatternly as to speak curtly, the habit of adequate literary expression would soon be acquired. It is as integral to good breeding to amuse or inform a friend at a distance as to do so to one sitting in the next place at dinner.

It is easily imagined how, in former times, the arrival of the weekly post must have been a vivid incident in the dulness of country life; but

"Born a goddess, Dulness never dies,"

and she seems to have avenged herself for the greater frequency of letters in these latter days by pouring her spirit upon their pages.

In this country we look back to the latter half of the eighteenth and the first quarter of the nine-

teenth century, as the last period when men took enough pains to write letters worth reading; but we should be slow to admit that friendship is less prized now than then. Walpole, the prince of correspondents, quarrelled with most of his friends except Sir Horace Mann. Perhaps it was distance alone that prevented disagreement with him; but how full and warm the current of sympathy flows through the letters to the end! and, but for this art, their friendship must have died early of starvation. It may be as cynically true as ever, that although any man can say how many horses or cattle he possesses, none can say how many friends he reckons: still—friendship endures; and, while it does so, it is passing strange that the priceless link of correspondence should be allowed to rust.

At the risk of being wearisome, I must carry inquiry into this matter a little further. It is assumed that, because letters are so cheap and common, they can never be again what they were a hundred and fifty years ago. It is not difficult to imagine what they were then. In a certain Scottish country house there hangs on the wall of the central hall a mighty fabric of *appliqué* work, originally intended for and used as a carpet. Chairs and sofas are covered with the same material. It is the handiwork of a former lady of the house, and dates from 1767-77. The faithful effigies of hyacinths, crown imperials, fritillaries, honeysuckle, hellebore, tiger-

lilies, moss and other roses—all the lavish heraldry of the seasons that flaunted in the castle parterres in those long-dead years—still attest the industry of this gentle dame and her maidens. One can see them sitting round the plum-coloured fabric, stitching away as weeks, months, years slipped by. The part she had to play in life is known to have been the "patient Grizel" business; there remain her letters in witness of it, the ink more faded than her flowers. Truly to her, left to struggle with the narrow supplies allowed her by her selfish and absent husband, the rare arrival of the post must have been an event much looked forward to and greatly prized. But the point insisted on is this—it was *not* the rarity of it that gave it value, but the trouble people took to make their letters compensate for their rarity and cost.

Obviously, it is the people who meet oftenest and on the easiest terms who most prize each other's company; so the ease of frequent correspondence ought to multiply rather than detract from its value. It is easy to test the truth of this. Does the lover of to-day treasure one whit less fondly, or read over one fraction less frequently, the daily letter from his mistress that costs him nothing, than the lover of last century, who got a letter but once a-week that cost him eighteenpence? Does the nineteenth-century mother's heart yearn less achingly over her schoolboy's blotty scrawls, because she receives in a single morning more letters from her

friends than her grandmother got in six months? Not a bit. As an avenue of intercourse, a bond of affection, a source of delight, letter-writing has no more lost its virtue than speech has, but by our slipshod ways we let the wine run in the kennel that we used to love to set before our friends.

As with most metaphors, so fault may be found with that of a march to express the increase of civilisation. In some aspects it is like a stream that has ceased to run in its old channels. For the first time in history, from no cause that has ever been explained, we are without living architecture. In every former age, one desiring to build a house or a church instructed his architect as to the scale of the work, but never thought it necessary to specify the style; *that* was spontaneous. In the eleventh century the windows and doors would have round arches; in the thirteenth century, pointed with capitals on the pilasters; in the fifteenth century the mode dispensed with capitals—and so on. In each age it was assumed that the new building would be in the fashion of the day. Even when that fashion was a renaissance, it was a uniform, well-defined renaissance. Not till Walpole built Strawberry Hill and Scott followed with Abbotsford was it evident that architecture had ceased to live. Henceforward pretty and interesting piles might be reared with the bones of the mighty dead (with becoming respect to comparative anatomy), but houses could no more be living fabrics.

Modern architects can build excellent houses in any known style: he who pays for them has only to specify his fancy. Hence the *bizarre* phenomena of justice scowling down Fleet Street from the battlements of a feudal fortress—a Venetian Gothic palace trying to smile through the drizzle of the Western Highlands—a timbered, red-tiled, Cheshire manor-house perched beside a Renfrewshire coal-pit, like a pretty, smartly dressed lady in a dust-cart.

Signs of flickering life survived even Strawberry Hill and Abbotsford; there remained till within the last quarter-century a semblance of a style of the day. Cubitt and Haussman may hereafter be remembered as the last architects whose work carries upon it the evidence of its date. After them —chaos: Queen Anne elbows the Abencerrages, King John rubs shoulders with Adelphi Adams, and the niggling confectionery of our native Tudor cringes before

> "Those marble garments of the ancient gods,
> Which the blaspheming hand of Babylon
> Hath gathered out of ruins, and hath raised
> In this, her dark extremity of guilt."

One is led to wonder what kind of sentiment will hang in after-ages round the ruins of the nineteenth century. It has been said that, prone as men are to revivals, no one will ever be tempted to revive the eighteen hundreds. It is indeed difficult to imagine any one studiously reconstructing Buckingham Palace (itself a distorted renaissance), nor can

one believe that any degree of antiquity can ever invest it with the charm that hangs over the wasted walls of Holyrood, or even the well-preserved dowagerhood of Hampton Court.

One thing is certain,—our architects are preparing a pretty comedy of errors for future generations of antiquaries. Massive Norman keeps that frown over English meadows, hoar peel-towers of the Border, dismal brochs on Highland capes, countless country churches and manor-houses—each has an intelligible story for the traveller; but heaven help him who shall try five hundred years hence to read the tale of nineteenth-century civilisation by means of its buildings!

We do not realise the full absurdity of it now—perhaps it is as well for the tempers of some of us that we do not; but it will reflect little credit on our art hereafter. A spick-and-span house built in the fashion of a medieval baron's stronghold is a common object on a Surrey heath or at a seaside watering-place. As parts of a detached villa, towers with machicolated battlements and loopholed turrets are really nothing but an elaborate practical joke; an eligible seaside residence tricked out with these is about as serious as the men-at-arms in a Lord Mayor's show. Our architects display a creditable acquaintance of archæology, but the effect is not more pleasant than when a grown person affects juvenile airs.

But however absurd some results of the Gothic revival may be, we are bound to be grateful for others. Receiving its main impulse from the skill of Pugin,

guided and strengthened by the exquisite feeling and noble language of the author of the 'Stones of Venice,' it has taken such firm hold of the popular imagination that each year sees more intelligent care bestowed on our ancient buildings. In its early fervour it was the cause of terrible ravages from the hand of the restorer, but even his work is carried on more reverently now; and as for pulling down or wantonly defacing—an effectual stop has been put to these. One can hardly imagine a state of public opinion that would allow of such an act being perpetrated as that of which I have lately seen mournful traces in a certain ruined Scottish priory. The south doorway of the nave is of late Norman work, enriched with delicately carved mouldings: in adapting the building to the requirements of a modern Scottish kirk (presumably about two hundred years ago), a deep straight groove was cut right through each side of the arch mouldings, in order to support the gable of a porch.

Certainly one of the pleasanter signs of recent civilisation is a new-born respect for relics of the past. It is a sentiment which may not, perhaps, rank as a moral virtue, but is to be prized, if on no other account, for the keen enjoyment it confers. No doubt the present often jars harshly with the past, yet often it falls into unexpected harmony with it. One spring afternoon I strolled into the gardens surrounding the Cathedral of Tours. The sun shone brightly on the young leaves; an artillery band was playing; the townsfolk strolled about or sat under the trees; the

men, as usual, vying with each other in ugliness of attire—the women displaying travesty of the last but two Parisian fashion; children ran about; nurses wheeled perambulators,—in short, it was such a gathering as may be witnessed on a fine day in any French garrison town. But what has stamped it as one of the fairest scenes in a life's memory is that high over the delicate greenery soared the grey cathedral towers, shining softly like columns of dull silver against the blue vault. Eighteen generations or more have been laid in the earth since these stones were reared heavenward; rough fellows we should count the builders if they stood among us now, and we should expect them to be astonished at our progress, and in that they would not disappoint us: yet it was *their* handiwork that gave peculiar charm to the scene. The band would have played, the sun shone, the trees given as soft a shade, but the whole thing would have been forgotten as a sleepy *fête*-day but for those cathedral towers, which modern masons might mimic, but no modern architect could invent.

With all our accumulated experience we lack discretion in the art of enjoyment—seem indeed to be getting worse rather than better in this respect, more stupid rather than wise. It is only possible within reasonable limits to touch on an instance of these here and there, but a very obvious one may be taken at random. The hue of gold is that from which the eye derives the fullest delight—not yellow, as of a buttercup, but the hue of the metal itself. There is in it a

sense of fulness and richness, a blending of glow and coolness, which the old illuminators well understood, and which no other substance can give. Plainly, then, æsthetic continence would forbid the vulgar use of gold, even after profusion of discovery had put it within every one's reach. On the cupola of St Paul's, on the vanes of Westminster, on the gates of the Monarch's park—it may be most rightly spread, for these are what we have of most noble; but it is not reserved for such as these—it is spread more profusely over the walls of gin-palaces than in the royal house; the panels of every hackney-cab blaze with it as brightly as the State coach: the trade advertisement, the publican's sign—everything that is common and much that is unclean—borrows the lustre of gilding, till our jaded sight loses the sense of what should be matchless beauty, and we derive less pleasure from it than a negro rightly does from contemplating his glass beads. It is a sound canon of taste that places ormulu under the same ban as stucco.

However, it is idle to repine, for if sumptuary law were ever to be revived, there are perhaps sores for it to deal with deeper than this mere surface irritation.

It may not be too much to hope that the reverence which is beginning to be shown for ancient monuments may be extended to animate and inanimate nature. Hitherto civilisation has dealt harshly with lands and their wild creatures, altering the face of the former and brushing aside the latter to make way for

omnivorous, insatiate man. In this country the regret that has long weighed on the minds of the few at the sight of devastated landscapes, has at length, almost too late, begun to find expression in the voice of the many. On no question does Parliament show more vigilant jealousy than on those touching encroachment on waste lands; railway engineers may no longer regard a common as a space intended by nature to have a branch line run through it. But scored and seared and deeply smirched as is the fair face of our island, a similar process is going on in all parts of this overcrowded globe. Many of us are old enough to remember the publication of Mr Gordon Cumming's work on African adventure and sport, describing how he carried out the purpose defined in his preface—"to penetrate into the interior further than the foot of civilised man had yet trodden." His pages reek with the slaughter of countless pachyderms as well as of elands, giraffes, and lions. The term of a single human generation has sufficed to extinguish these noble forms of life in Bechuanaland; their existence, is, indeed, incompatible with civilisation, unless by timely and kindly forethought the example of the United States Government is followed in reserving large tracts as as national parks, wherein some of the old world animals may be preserved.

We may plume ourselves, not without reason, on the restrictions placed in late years on the cruelty of human beings, whether towards each other or towards the lower animals. It is an astounding

matter for reflection how long the much vaunted "march" went on before it occurred to men that the world would be a better place if there were less suffering in it. Some of the pioneers of civilisation themselves suffered most bitterly. No mortal ever was born upon this earth more willing and capable to leave it a better place than he found it than the Franciscan friar, Roger Bacon. In his day alchemy and astrology obscured the field which was afterwards to be explored by the clear lenses of chemistry and astronomy; yet, hindered as he was by the prejudice and superstition of the thirteenth century, his genius touched the true clue to physical knowledge, and revealed to him, as through a mist, the outlines of truth.

The vast range of subjects dealt with in his little-known works; the spirit in which they are handled, so averse from the mysticism and obscurantism of his contemporaries, testify to his unflagging zeal and seldom erring understanding. One has to picture the breathless, reverent patience with which he watched the veil moving little by little aside from the face of nature, to note the masculine fibre of the mind that steered so stoutly athwart the strong current of contemporary thought, before realising how bitter must have been the doom to which jealous ignorance consigned him. His precious writings were torn from him and condemned; he himself, deprived of books and writing materials, was imprisoned for many years; the piercing intellect, forced to refrain from observation or research, brooded in silence over

the might-have-been. "I was imprisoned," he wrote mournfully in after-years, "because of the incredible stupidity of those with whom I had to do." Could human cruelty devise a more brutal punishment than this?

Oh, but it may be said, this happened in the dark ages. Very well: skip three hundred years, and observe the incidents of the "march" just two centuries ago. Sir Thomas Browne, Doctor of Medicine, the cultivated and lively author not only of 'Pseudodoxia Epidemica,' a work devoted to the refutation of vulgar errors, but of the far more profound 'Religio Medici,' appears in the witness-box to give evidence against two witches.

More than a hundred years later (we are getting towards the recent stages of the "march" now) lively debates took place in the House of Commons upon a bill to abolish bear-baiting. The bill was thrown out by 50 votes to 32, although, to illustrate the horrors of the system, the Hon. George Lamb, member for Dungarvan, produced a printed paper (which is still in existence) in the form of a play-bill, having at the top the Royal arms between the letters A. R. (*Anna Regina*), of which the following is the text:—

"At the Bear Garden in Hockley in the Hole, near Clerkenwell Green.

"These are to give notice to all gentlemen, gamesters, and others that on this present Monday, being the 27th of April 1702, a great match is to be fought by a bald faced

Dog of Middlesex against a fallow Dog of Cow Cross, for a Guinea each Dog, five let-goes out of hand, which goes fairest and furthest in wins all: being a General Day of Sport by all the Old Gamesters and a Great Mad Bull to be turned loose in the Game-place, with Fire-works all over him, and two or three cats ty'd to his Tail, and Dogs after them. Also other variety of Bull-baiting and Bear-baiting. Beginning at two of the Clock."

It is true that the advertisement was at that time (in 1825) more than a century old, but there was nothing in the law as it then was to prevent similar horrors, *and the House of Commons refused to alter it.*

This brings the matter down to our own times. Much has been done, but our hands are hardly clean enough for complacency yet.

Few societies have done more good work than that for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, yet any one walking in the Birdcage Walk of an early morning and seeing the barbarous treatment of costers' donkeys and ponies there, must come to the conclusion that more is wanted than any society, however diligent, can effect. It is a long, flat piece of road, and underfed, over-loaded animals are mercilessly raced along it.

It is a pity that horses suffer mutely. If they could express their torments by yells as piercing and loud in proportion to their size as, for example, a wounded hare utters, we should soon be enlightened as to the amount of suffering in our streets. Some of the hansom cabs which ply there are admirably turned out and driven, but there are still many whose owners

act on the principle of a minimum of corn and a maximum of whipcord. In one such I was travelling one day: the driver plied his whip vigorously about the tenderest parts of his horse's flanks, and awkwardly allowed the lash to strike me across the face. The pain was acute, and *I* did not suffer in silence; yet for one indirect cut that I received in that journey, the unfortunate quadruped received scores. He received punishment at the rate of about fifty lashes a mile, which, if his average daily task is moderately computed at twelve miles, would give the hideous total of six hundred lashes a-day!

This incident took place in broad daylight, but cabmen's night-horses are indeed a pitiful class. Nearly all of those that are assembled nightly in Palace Yard, when the House of Commons is sitting, are suffering from navicular disease, caused by fast work on hard pavements. You may see the unhappy animals standing with first one fore-foot, then the other, pointed forward to relieve the pain, which must resemble toothache on a large scale, for it is caused by the decay of a bone nearly two inches long in the centre of the foot. Would society endure horses being worked in this condition if they could signify their pangs as plainly as a fine lady with neuralgia?

The barbarity of tight bearing-reins was forcibly exposed and condemned by a writer in 'Blackwood's Magazine' of June 1875, and certainly the excessive use of them thereafter became less common; but it is still too often to be seen. It would not be seen at all

if people in general understood the peculiar form of torture produced by it. A pair of fat, well-groomed, 16-hands carriage-horses standing in the streets are not subjects to attract commiseration from passers-by; the restless tossing of their heads may be taken for the sign of pride and spirit: but what heartrending groans could alone express what these fine animals have to endure! Along the top of a horse's neck runs a massive sinew, strong enough to support the leverage of the head; it is attached to several vertebræ nearest the shoulder, then it runs free over the crest and becomes attached again to the vertebræ nearest the poll. When the head is pulled into the position decreed by man's vanity, the vertebræ under the crest press hard into the sinew, and must cause intense suffering, sometimes setting up the inflammation known as poll-evil.

Christianity and civilisation are both relied on as effective agencies to insure merciful treatment of dumb animals, yet how strangely they are found sometimes in alliance with gross cruelty. To be a Wesleyan minister implies Christianity—to possess a pony-carriage and groom implies civilisation; but while I am revising these pages for the press the following strange story appears in the newspapers:—

"At the Godstone Petty Sessions on Wednesday, the Rev. —— ——, described as a Wesleyan minister, of Copthorne, was charged on a summons with cruelty to a pony. Mr H. Bentinck Budd stated that on the 29th ult. he was opposite the Mission-Hall at Lingfield, and noticed

the defendant's pony-carriage was in charge of a groom. On the front of the carriage was inscribed, 'Thy grace is sufficient for me,' and on the back was written the text, 'Behold, the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.' Observing that the pony, which was five years old, and in good condition, was in great agony, and that its neck was arched in an unnatural manner, witness examined it and found that its mouth was covered with blood and foam. Its tongue was hanging out, being perfectly black and hard and swollen. Its lower jaw was discoloured, and its mouth wide open. There was an indiarubber bearing-rein fastened from the top of a pad to a Liverpool curb bit, and attached to the ring were two bags of shot, which were afterwards found to weigh 2 lb. 6 oz. The poor animal appeared to be in such excruciating pain that he insisted upon the instrument at once being removed, and for that purpose he sent for a policeman.

"*By Mr Cripps* (who defended). He had no objection whatever to the text being on the carriage, but he did object to the hypocrisy of the thing. He did say that if the defendant had been a younger man he would have given him a good thrashing.

"Mr R. A. Thrale, veterinary surgeon, of Croydon, said that, having examined the rein, &c., he was of opinion that the animal must have suffered great pain. It was a most improper thing to use for driving, being in reality part of a 'dumb-jock,' which was used in the stable to 'mouth' a young horse. In its place it was a good thing, but he had never heard of one being attached to harness before.

"For the defence, Mr Roberts, a veterinary surgeon, of Tunbridge Wells, stated that the same sort of rein was in constant use for driving in Yorkshire. It was a capital thing, and was not cruel, as, being made of indiarubber, it would naturally stretch.

"*By the Bench.* He did not know that it contained stout blind-cord, which prevented it stretching beyond a few inches.

"A representative from the makers of the rein was called and stated that they had a large sale for them. It was not cruelty to use them.

"*The Chairman.* Do your firm recommend them for driving in the manner the defendant has done?

"*Witness.* Certainly not.

"The Chairman said the Bench was satisfied that the defendant had committed a gross act of cruelty, and that there were no extenuating circumstances. A fine of £5, 5s., including costs, was imposed."

Some years ago I was witness of an act of great though unintentional cruelty inflicted by the ignorance of scientific people concerned in the management of an electric exhibition. Among other examples of the application of electric lighting was one to show it in operation under water. A glass globe, filled with water, contained a burner in full blaze, and—a gold-fish. Of course the fish was only put in to make an attractive object, but one has only to remember that fish suffer from exposure even to ordinary daylight, that the whole surface of their bodies is sensitive to it, and lastly, that they have no eyelids—cannot close their eyes—to realise that this was torture applied of more than Carthaginian ferocity. In this matter of cruelty the intentions of this generation are undoubtedly good, although it seems as if in some respects civilisation had outstripped knowledge—as if we had been travelling too fast to take sufficient thought.

Although we are all ready to take credit for the advance of civilisation, there are constantly heard complaints about the signs of the times. One of the commonest of these is that "servants are not what they were." It would be very odd if they were, considering that masters pride themselves upon being very different from those of olden time, and that all the surroundings and manner of life have altered so much. But what is intended to be conveyed is that servants are no longer so good as they were. It is a peevish and wearisome complaint that has been heard from generation to generation. Even such a shrewd observer and frank moralist as Defoe gave utterance to it nearly two centuries ago. Hear his grumble in "Everybody's Business is Nobody's Business" about the servant girl of 1725:—

"Her neat leathern shoes are now transformed into laced ones with high heels; her yarn stockings are turned into fine woollen ones, with silk clocks; and her high wooden pattens are kicked away for leathern clogs. She must have a hoop, too, as well as her mistress; and her poor linsey-woolsey petticoat is changed into a good silk one, for four or five yards wide at the least. Not to carry the description further, in short, plain country Joan is now turned into a fine city madam,—can drink tea, take snuff, and carry herself as high as the best."

But indeed this spirit of complaint is of far higher antiquity than Defoe's day. As a narrative, few chapters of Holy Writ are more graphic than 1 Sam. xxv., which describes an episode in the knight-

errantry of David, the future King of Israel. He comes to the abode of Nabal, "whose possessions were in Carmel; and the man was very great, . . . and the name of his wife was Abigail; and she was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man was churlish, and evil in his doings." Has it not a familiar ring in our ears when this rich churl exclaims, "There be many servants that break away from their masters *nowadays*"? Well, at all events, persists the *laudator temporis acti*, there was always a wholesome distinction between classes until recent years: the aping of gentility by such persons as have no real claim to the quality has come in since the first Reform Act. That also is a peevish delusion. Here is a passage from a letter to the 'Edinburgh Magazine' for September 1785, which might have appeared with equal freshness in the 'Saturday Review' of last week:—

"The word *gentleman* seems to have extended its signification very considerably within these last few years, and in my memory to have comprehended almost every male being who wears a linen shirt. The *gentleman*, I was informed, who had come to take my measure for a pair of black plush breeches, was in the lobby; the *gentleman* of whom I had bought some cart harness had, it seems, done me the honour to call when I was abroad (*i.e.*, out walking or driving, not in foreign parts), and had left his name on a card, forsooth," &c.

The influence under which the minds of men revert fondly to bygone times is not altogether unkindly;

"the pattern of the altar of the Lord which our fathers made" must ever be dearer to us than the latest improved design: but to fall foul of trifling failures in social respect, or to imagine a new-born uppishness in wage-earners, betokens imperfect understanding or a dull imagination. It sits with least grace on those who have derived most advantage from the general advance in comfort and abundance of every sort.

But to quote Mr Leslie Stephen once more, "We must not cry over a dead donkey while the children are in want of bread." The times have a far graver aspect than any that have been touched on in the random and somewhat trivial paragraphs of these pages. We cannot escape from our own shadows. The time may be at the door when the people shall be so well educated, and shall have learnt so perfectly the art of self-government, that spoiled ballot-papers will be unknown, save such as may be defaced, of significant purpose, by poetical lampoons on the candidates. But also the time must be at hand when, if the population maintains its present rate of increase, standing-room on the globe will become a pressing problem. The strain of competition is intense; capital and labour seem to have thrown aside all semblance of goodwill; there is an anxiety on the minds of those who have leisure to think that is not lessened by the thought that the administration of affairs in this country depends upon those who have little time for reflection, upon whom the question of a few shillings a-week more or less wages presses far more nearly than

the guidance of an empire's destiny. There be many who sigh, "Ask for the old paths where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls," and to these it seems almost as if the dilemma were one fulfilling the condition stipulated for by the heathen poet—

> "Nor let the God in person stand display'd,
> Unless the labouring plot deserve his aid."

# MNEMOSYNE.

THE harp of memory has many strings, but none of them all vibrate so easily or so truly as those of scent and of sound. It might be supposed that sight would link us more securely than these to the past, for seeing is believing, we say: to have seen is to know. In Greek — the most exact language in the world — *οἶδα*, I know, is the perfect tense of the verb *εἶδειν*, to see. Nevertheless blind men have the most featly memories; vision has the effect of distracting as well as of supplying thought. It is the custom of Ministers at question time in the House of Commons to read their answers, so as to ensure accuracy; but those who were in the House when the late Mr Fawcett was Postmaster-General, must remember how unerringly that sightless official used to repeat long statements full of complicated detail.

Besides, sight, being subjective, is treacherous. Scent and sound, it may be said, are as truly sub-

jective as sight, and so far might be held to be not more trustworthy as recorders of passing events; but they differ from it in this respect, that their record is not affected by a sense of proportion. The perfume of a rose and the sound of a trumpet seem as powerful to a grown man as to a child; but a child looking on a lake, a house, or a horse, is impressed with the size of the object compared to himself: as he grows in stature, the impression grows on a proportionate scale. At middle age a man may shut his eyes and behold the school he left thirty years ago: he has never been there since, yet all the well-known features present themselves as clearly as if he still stood among them. He resolves to devote a day to revisiting the old place; perhaps he has a son to enter in the same establishment where learning was drubbed into himself. When he gets there, is his recollection confirmed? Infallibly no. Even if familiar houses have not been pulled down and rebuilt, or the twilight lanes he used to idle in have not been transformed into busy glaring streets — if self-conscious villas and rectangular garden-plots have not covered the hillside whereon he knew nothing taller than the foxglove, or more formal than the breadths of fern—there is a change defying definition. Though not a brick may have been laid nor a tree felled since he last stood there, he is as much perplexed as Rip van Winkle. The distances are all false, the heights are all altered; trees, houses, and hedges stand in the well-remembered relation, but everything seems

as if viewed through the wrong end of a telescope. There is the cricket-ground, and beyond it the brick wall of the garden; it used to be recounted as a heroic feat how Buller, one of the under-masters, once made so mighty a swipe to "long on" that he drove the ball right over the wall, and through the roof of the head-master's vinery. *Now* what strikes the visitor is the perilous proximity of the glass to the wickets.

No; it is no longer to the man the same place it used to be to the boy—not the scene which in the interval has so often passed before his after-sight. His own growth, alike in mental scope and in pounds avoirdupois, has made it impossible for him ever to be in the old relation to it again, so as to see it in the old proportion. An early Italian poet, Zappi, sings, "When I used to measure myself with my goat, and my goat was the taller, even then I loved Clori;" and throughout Zappi's life that goat remained the taller.

Alas! if that be so with houses and fields, much more is it the case with faces of friends. A man grows through youth to manhood and middle age; little by little the features of his associates change as his own change: the untiring sculptor adds line upon line so stealthily, here a little and there a little, that Tom still seems the same Tom to Dick and to himself as when they played in the eleven together; the same old jokes as of yore show no signs of wear and tear; still, perhaps, to each of them the

future seems as much better than the present as ever it did.

"I say, old fellow," Dick says to Tom one day, "I declare your hair is turning grey!"

"Oh, I know, dear boy," answers Tom, jauntily; "all my family have that way with them, you know. Why, the governor (bless the old boy!) used often to tell me that he was as grey as the Bass Rock when he married, and he wasn't much over thirty then, I expect."

Or, perhaps, Tom's eye rests meditatively on the fifth button of Dick's waistcoat, as they stand palavering in the street·

"Holloa, old man!" he exclaims seriously, "you're not getting a ——?" and he passes his finger along the line of beauty. "I declare you are, though; 'pon my sacred Sam, you are! you're getting quite a bow-window."

"I? not a bit!" returns Dick, straddling confidently and pulling down his waistcoat; "that ass Stitchway never *can* cut a white waistcoat decently. Oh, one always puts on a bit of weight in summer, you know, but I'll soon work that off in August."

And so they mutually humbug each other, and neither of them notes the relentless arithmetic of time, till, perhaps, one Sunday afternoon, having strolled into Tattersall's yard, the naked truth of chronology is flashed upon them.

"Who the deuce is that nodded to me just now?" Tom asks Dick—"that fat old fellow there, with a

red face and grey whiskers. Strikes me I know his face, too, but hang me if I can put a name to it!"

"Don't know, I'm sure," replies Dick, who is busy consulting the catalogue of to-morrow's sale; "never saw the beggar before in my life."

Presently the "beggar" comes towards them. "Why, Tom," he exclaims, "I declare I believe you've forgotten me! Well, it *is* a long time since we were in Lower Fifth together, still you might remember Harry. And you, Dick—why, man, you'd never have got out of that scrape with the catapult but for me."

They stand together again—Tom, Dick, and Harry —as they have not stood together for a quarter of a century, and, for the first time, Tom and Dick realise the fact that they are old fogies. Yes; not a shadow of doubt about it: they have the damning evidence of Harry's appearance to convict them. The sands have been running so silently all the time, the change in themselves has been so gradual, that, seeing each other constantly, they never suspected the mischief that was going on, till, presto! here is Harry, whom they have remembered as they last saw him, smooth-faced, slim, and εὔκομος as young Achilles, grown stout, bald, with watery eyes, and the harsh skin of age, to remind them that each of them is within a few moons of the half-hundred. Things that are equal to the same thing are equal to one another—Dick cannot evade that simple proposition: he knows he is the same age as Tom and Harry, he sees that

Tom looks as old as Harry; argal—he is as much a fogie as either of them.

It arrives to all of us sooner or later, softly or suddenly, the doleful conviction that youth has sped. Leisurely lives are often embittered by long anticipation of coming age, but busier men are oftenest brought abruptly face to face with knowledge of the fact—like Tom and Dick. Poets of all languages have made much of this pathetic crisis. Some, like Coleridge, grow restive under what they feel to be an injustice, that a spirit still young should be doomed to durance in a failing frame.

> "Ere I was old? ah, woful Ere,
> Which tells me Youth's no longer here.
> Oh, Youth! for years so many and sweet
> 'Tis known that thou and I were one.
> I'll think it but a fond conceit,
> It cannot be that thou art gone."

Poor Villon resents it too, but admits, by the mouth of *la belle Heaulmyère,* the hopelessness of the case:—

> "Ha! Viellesse félonne et fière,
> Pour quoy m'as si tost abatue?
> . . . . . .
> Qu'est devenu ce front poly,
> Ces cheveulx blonds, sourcilz voultyz,
> Grand entr'œil, le regard joly,
> Dont prenoye les plus subtils;
> Ce beau nez droit, grand re petiz,
> Ces petites joinctes oreilles,
> Menton fourchu, clair vis, traictis,
> Et ces belles levres vermeilles."

But Alfred de Musset, too gentle to resist, mournfully shakes his wise head and sighs:—

> "Qu'ai-je fait? qu'ai-je appris? le temps est si rapide,
> L'enfant marche joyeux sans songeant au chemin;
> Il le croit infini n'en voyant pas la fin.
> Tout à coup il rencontre un source limpide,
> Il s'arrête, il se penche, il s'y voit un veillard."

If eyes are such treacherous witnesses of what is passing daily before them, it follows that their evidence must ever be an untrustworthy basis of memory. What service were his eyes to George Romney in preparing him to meet again the wife he had deserted thirty-seven years ago? They had learnt in the interval to dwell on the figures and features of all the smart ladies who had sat to him; to revel in the statuesque poses of the "Mistress of the Attitudes," Lady Hamilton — how could they retain a faithful picture of the rustic Westmoreland lass, as she was when he first loved her? how much less could they help him to recognise her in the homely grey-haired dame, to whose forgiving care he committed himself, broken with disease, when fine-weather friends forgot him?

The untrustworthiness of eyesight arises from its subjectivity. All the senses, indeed, are subjective, but some are not so easily betrayed as others. The senses of smell and hearing are vigilant sentries; nothing stirs memory more surely than a perfume. Revisit after long absence a house once well known, and though rooms may have been repapered and re-

painted, though the familiar furniture may have had to make way for the latest freaks of upholstery, though new pictures hang on the walls and strange voices echo through the corridors—still there hangs about it the same odour, peculiar to that house and to no other, recalling countless associations that no unaided feat of cogitation could renew.

Although this is all too well known to bear repetition, and is alluded to here, not as the result of observation, but as what every one is familiar with, yet no one has ever explained why every house possesses its own distinguishing scent, differing from that of all other houses as indescribably yet as perceptibly as the *timbre* of one human voice differs from all others. This is probably the case even in those houses where uniformity of character and circumstance produce identically the same impression on the olfactory nerves of the casual stranger entering them.

Horace Walpole complains to one of his correspondents of the monotony of town architecture and furniture in his day. He says he never can tell at any moment whether he is in the house he is in, or in the one he has just come out of. But this could only be true of those houses where he was an infrequent caller, for his keen observation would soon have enabled him to detect individuality in the atmosphere of each. This *aura* is distinct from the well-known smells dominant in different classes of dwellings, such as the odour of "peat-reek" impregnating the cottages of the north; while in some parts

of England houses of that class are redolent of bacon, in other parts of apples. In like manner, in a certain class of small town-houses, lodging-houses, and the lesser grade of suburban villas, the visitor is certain to encounter the smell of roast mutton. This is as sure to happen as that he will be stung if he kicks over a bee-hive. If he dislikes pain he had better give the bee-hive a wide berth; if he objects to the smell of mutton he should keep outside houses of this description, for there it has been, is, and will be for evermore. It would make no difference could it be proved that mutton had not been cooked in the house for a month, or that the whole household lived upon herbs—that scent is indigenous to buildings of this class, and is altogether independent of domestic incidents.

But assuredly there is a subtler aroma which the chance visitor cannot perceive. The peat-smoke, the bacon, the apples, roast mutton itself, but produce the dominant air; along with each there runs a delicate *obbligato*, touching the sense of any one who has lived or loved or suffered in that dwelling, and evoking ghosts with which the grosser effluvia have nothing to do. Any one can prove this for himself. If there is one room in any country-house, that is likely to smell the same as the corresponding room in another country-house, is it not the smoking-room? Enter half-a-dozen smoking-rooms in the course of an afternoon, or as many as you can that are invested with associations for you, and say if there is not a difference between the smell of each. Of course they all smell

of tobacco; but if you are not struck by the characteristic odour of each—the second scent—if you are not thrilled by a host of bygones, if you do not hear the voices of the dead as though death itself was no more, if you cannot feel the warm clasp of fingers long since fleshless, nor see bald pates once more covered with shining curls,—then you should take immediate precautions against creeping paralysis, locomotor ataxy, or premature senile debility.

Perhaps, after all, you need not take alarm; modern methods have tended in some respects to modify and disarrange the importance of the senses. No one thinks of cultivating the nose, although no trouble and expense is spared in training the ear and educating the eye; as an avenue of understanding and enjoyment, the faculty of smell is utterly ignored in our scheme of education. When Jacob the supplanter stood by the sick-bed of his blind sire, we read how Israel thought he recognised the odour of his first-born, and it pleased him. "See," he said, "the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed." Modern prudery recoils from such a mode of reognition, simply because modern noses have been allowed to grow insensible to all except pungent or overpowering smells. Rightly trained, the sense of smell would indefinitely extend our æsthetic perception, and we might even learn to derive pleasure from some of the odours which our untutored faculties now make us consider unpleasant. The mere smell of kid gloves prevails to send the writer of these lines

into a tender ecstasy, in virtue of its association with a dancing academy, where, in his earliest teens, he lost his heart to a pink-cheeked maiden.

But enough of smells for the present; as a subject for special study, there prevails as yet in genteel circles a remarkable degree of prejudice against them. Sound, however, is under no such ban; all properly instructed people smile at the Scottish country gentleman who was kept awake by the nightingales the first night he spent at Florence, and complained that "he couldna sleep for the roarin' of some beasts in the bushes;" and sound has a connection with memory almost as intimate as scent has. As I write these lines, I hear under the window a strain that stirs a different train of recollection from that awakened by the blackbirds and thrushes which conspire to monopolise this month of March. It is the wintry little song of the robin, and it carries me back over a score of autumns to one bright October morning, keen with the nip of earliest frost, rich with newly stored stackyards, and radiant with splendour of changing woods.

I am once more in the noblest of all the English counties, Northumberland, more lavish than all the others in charms for the lover of scenery and of history —for the devotee of rod, of gun, or of boot and saddle. Yes — Meltonians must not snort disdain at this assertion; it is not intended to draw a presumptuous comparison between Belford enclosures and Ashwell pastures—between Coquetdale and Whissendine: yet these north-country foxes take a lot of catching,

having, indeed, the knack of running straight in a degree not always conspicuous in their southern kindred. It needs a stout heart beneath his waistcoat, quick eyes under his hat, and a well-bred nag between his knees, to keep a man on terms with the Tynedale or Morpeth packs when scent lies hot on the Border uplands. Those who have conned the pages of Nimrod's 'Northern Tour' may have learnt that hounds can race and men will follow in latitudes far north of the classical shires. It is in Northumberland more than in any other county that hunting, shooting, and fishing of excellent quality exist side by side.

I retrace my steps on that far-off October morning, till I stand, rod in hand, and cased to the armpits in waders, where Tyne rolls his dark flood between Bellingham and Wark. I was to begin that day on the Doctor's Stream, which laves the foot of the doctor's garden; for the said doctor (peace be to his kindly soul!), though a keen fisher, never used to turn out before mid-day, and, having none of the angler's proverbial jealousy, cared not though his stream had been whipped over before he came to it; he was pretty sure to show as good a record as any one who had preceded him. Perhaps the secret lay in the doctor's peculiar style of fishing. Most salmon-fishers believe in a low point and a sunk fly, in single gut (except in heavy water), in frequent changes of fly, and in using only one fly at a time. Not so the doctor: in sunshine as in shade, this original always

used unstained treble gut, and fished with two flies of an unvarying pattern on his cast, very bushy, with grey wool bodies and long upright wings made of dyed feathers, resembling no living thing in the heaven above, or on the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth. These extraordinary compositions he used to fling out at right angles to the stream, and, holding aloft his rod, draw them towards him along the surface of the water. That this heterodox method did not prove so unprofitable as by all the canons of angling it should have done, may be judged from the fact that at the time of this, my first visit to North Tyne, the doctor had already scored upwards of one hundred and fifty salmon during the season.

Well, to return to my own proceedings: of course there was the usual argument with the attendant who "knew the water" as to the best fly to use. Salmon-fishing would be reft of half its delightful mystery if fishermen allowed common-sense to persuade them that, inasmuch as their lures must pass between the fish and the light, almost all theory about the colour of flies must be utterly illusory. Robert Robson (would that type could represent the exquisite Northumbrian burr in his name!) was loyal to the time-honoured patterns—the dun turkey and grey mallard; I, on the other hand, had made it a rule wherever I went to put up flies as different as possible from those locally in use, thereby, as may be supposed, often incurring thinly veiled contempt for my ignorance.

As in those days dull and neutral tints were held sacred on most rivers, it followed that my polychrome collection used grievously to scandalise responsible riparian authorities. Robson fingered the Jock Scotts, Pophams, Silver-greys, and other masterpieces, with an indulgent disdain which even his excellent manners could not conceal. Finally he closed the box and remarked, as he drew a stained envelope from his breast-pocket, "The wetter is rayther small, sir, and the sun is vorry braight to-day; I would advaise you to try a small flee I have here," and he handed me a dingy, mean-looking insect about an inch long. "Our fish does not seem to heed the gaedy Irish flees," he continued, as I fingered the native manufacture fastidiously, trying in vain to smooth its hackle into some sort of symmetry; "I never seen any good come of using the like."

However, I had the fortitude or irreverence to put up a small Poynder of my own, and was soon up to my middle at the head of this fine stream, stretching the line bravely over what Robson assured me was a "vorry smittle [sure] place." Fish were showing themselves all over the pool. I could see them plunging like round-shot as far down as the bend where, a quarter of a mile below, the river wound out of sight between high wooded banks; but although I fished most carefully over three or four that were rising close by, they paid no attention to the fly. At the end of twenty minutes or so, Robson called out from the bank that I should take off the stranger

and try them with the "din tor-r-rkey"; but I replied, though with secret misgiving, that a fish which would not look at a Poynder would not look at anything. By this time I had fished a hundred yards down the stream: the current ran more languidly, and the surface seemed oily in the strong sunshine; the likeliest water was behind me. I noticed a dimple behind the fly, as if an over-curious troutlet had followed it round, when suddenly the line stopped—then came the well-known elastic drag, the reel spun round, and I was fast in a fish.

How different is the run of a salmon in a wide river with plenty of elbow-room, from the half-hearted struggles of one hooked in a narrow channel where he is from first to last under the point of the rod! This fellow played boldly, throwing himself well out of the water, showing himself to be a red kipper, turning 15 lb. on the scale when we got him out. Another about the same weight hooked himself a little lower in the pool than the first, and as I was bringing him to shore the doctor came down the river-bank to watch the proceedings.

What a comical figure he was, and how clearly that robin has sung him to life again!—a little chubby, rosy-cheeked, fair-haired man in enormous waders, with a pair of twinkling blue eyes and excessively long whiskers hanging on each side of a shaven chin, the whole crowned with a broad-flapped hat of whitish felt, stuck all over with fuzzy salmon-flies and innumerable ends of gut. His appearance

suggested irresistibly the sentences which were wont to be used as a test for French pronunciation: "'Original des originaux! comment te désoriginaliseras-tu?' 'Je suis un original des originaux, et je me ne désoriginaliserai jamais que lorsque tous les originaux se seront désoriginalisés.'" Taken as a whole, his most remarkable features were the whiskers and the waders; and it was precisely these two which once combined, as he subsequently described to me, to land him in a curious fix. He used to wade very deep, till nothing remained visible above water except the hat, the whiskers, and the arms wielding aloft a Castle Connel rod. Thus immersed, he one day hooked a heavy fish which spun out the line at a great pace. In one of these runs, the handle of the reel caught in the doctor's right whisker, wound it close up to his cheek, and there was the poor little man with the reel bound closely to his jowl, and every flap of the salmon's tail communicating a thrill of anguish to his captor. At length he managed to struggle ashore, sent a boy up to his house for a pair of scissors, and, having shorn the imprisoned whisker close off, succeeded in landing his fish.

Having begun it, I may as well complete the record of this, the first of many days since spent on North Tyne. Leaving the doctor in possession of his own stream and the pool below, which I had not touched, Robson led me down to where the river plunges into the gorge of Hargroves, reputed the best autumn

cast on the whole of the Tyne. Here the little Poynder accounted for two more fish, besides stirring several others; and then, out of indulgence to what Robson called his opinion, and I his prejudice, I submitted to his attaching a plain grey mallard to the cast. The result, I feel sure, must have often provided for him the subject of complacent narrative, as going to prove the superiority of local knowledge to exotic arrogancy. Midway in the channel, where the river sweeps under the cliff of Hargroves, rises a huge boulder, round which the water roars and churns unceasingly. This rock bears the name of Roaring Meg, and so high is the reputation it bears as a "smittle" spot, that probably any Tyneside angler who might be offered the choice of fishing five-and-twenty yards of water anywhere between Kielder and Prudhoe during an autumn day, would declare for ten yards above and fifteen yards below Roaring Meg.

I had fished this favourite spot once, if not twice, without stirring scale or fin. My own conviction remains unshaken, that had I persevered a third time with the same fly, the result would have been as propitious as that which followed on the exhibition of Robson's fetish. But that can never be proved now. Just as the little grey mallard swung round in the strong water above Roaring Meg it was seized below the surface, thirty yards of line were torn from the reel, and a splendid clean fish threw himself out of the water below the great rock. It was the best

fish of the day, and I could feel no resentment at Robson's caustic observation as he removed his fly from the lip of the salmon, "Maybe we'd ha' done better to fish wi' the grey drake raight through."

Bonny Tyneside! how I love that robin whose feeble note—

> "Whispering I know not what of wild and sweet,
> Like that strange song I heard Apollo sing,
> When Ilion like a mist rose into towers"—

has carried me, *procul negotiis*, to where your lordly reaches wind among the groves of Hesleyside! How grandly your towering cliffs flush into scarlet and gold before the November gales begin roaring across the North Sea; and how good it is to muse upon the kindly manners and quaint sayings of the race that own your beautiful valley as their home!

Situated as we are, perhaps it is doubtful how far we should conduce to our happiness or usefulness by intensifying beyond a certain point the vividness of recollection. Themistocles held the art of oblivion in higher esteem than the art of memory. Man has been synthetically described as an animal who weeps and makes others to weep, and most of us have some day to weep when we remember Zion. In most lives there is something it is wiser to forget—much unwisdom, many a disappointment, partings, lost opportunities, and hasty words—the degree in which that may be done depends much on temperament; the

more sanguine minds, though they cannot escape regret, do not repine. There is as much difference in the quality of grief as in the compass and quality of different voices:—

> "Oh, my boy!
> Thy tears are dewdrops, sweet as those on roses,
> But mine the faint and iron sweat of sorrow."

Over-sensitive spirits sometimes allow the remembrance of a heavy loss or single grievous fault to embitter the whole current of existence. Two persons lately stood on the shore of the Clyde on a bright summer day. A steamer came down the blue firth, pouring from her funnel volumes of black smoke, which trailed behind her in the calm air for a couple of miles.

"Isn't it monstrous," exclaimed one, "that that odious boat should be allowed to defile such a fair landscape? Surely those who live here, and still more those who come to the seaside for health, have a right to insist on legislation to put down the nuisance."

"As for the blemish on the landscape," replied the other, who happened to be a man of science, "I agree that it is barbarous in the last degree; but as to the injury to health I am not so clear, because if you could collect several miles of that smoke-trail and compress the solid matter, you would find it would all go easily into a single teacup."

So it often is with the grief or remorse that is allowed to trail through and darken the whole course

of a life. Analysed and vigorously dealt with, it would be found that it has been allowed to assume importance quite out of proportion to its intrinsic weight.

Then comes the question, was Dante justified in pronouncing the oft-quoted judgment which has passed into aphorism?—

> "Nessum maggior dolore
> Che recordarsi del tempo felice
> Nella miseria."

Prosper Mérimée has left it on record how he used to discuss this passage with his friend, Henri Beyle, who would maintain that Dante was wrong, and that the recollection of happiness is always, and under any circumstances, itself a source of enjoyment. Mérimée defended the poet; but, in his old age, he wrote, "*aujourd'hui il me semble que Beyle avait raison.*" Dante's sentiment is musically echoed in the verse of a modern Scottish poet—

> "O, I wad fain forget them a'—
> Remembered guid but deepens ill,
> As gleids o' licht far seen by nicht
> Mak' the near mirk but mirker still."

Only you see the Scot, less scholarly than the Italian, has allowed himself the hazardous luxury of a metaphor—a kind of two-edged instrument that requires to be handled carefully. "Gleids o' licht" — *i. e.*, flames—though by contrast they intensify the gloom, do enable us to get through the night more safely and comfortably than we could do without them: though they may be too far off to dispel the darkness,

yet their cheering influence tends to lighten the oppression. Dr Ross sounded a truer note when he used to say that as sunshine is stored up in coal-measures, so past joy and gladness may be stored up in the soul as a light-giver in dark days. How many lives would be barren of joy, or even of hope, but for the light reflected from a happy childhood!

This will be more clearly seen as the process of memory is more closely examined. Scientists explain how everything we witness, endure, or consciously enact, makes an impression, indelible except by disease or senility, on tissues in the convolutions of the brain. We must all have been conscious at times of the unexpected revival of such impressions, brought about by some external influence, when scenes, deeds, words which had long been as if absolutely forgotten, and as if they had never been, suddenly come to mind, either vividly or at first faintly, but capable, by mental effort, of being brought into clearer relief. The impression has been there all the time, but the mind has been too much occupied with other and newer impressions to be conscious of it.

It is easy to illustrate this by a simple experiment. Of all the materials common to every room in every house, glass is at once the least impressionable and the most enduring. If a name or word be traced with the pressure of a clean finger upon a clean window-pane (the glass must be perfectly free from all film of moisture or dirt), the writing will be invisible; but

for many days, even weeks, afterwards, it will appear distinctly if the glass is breathed upon, gradually fade away again, and reappear as often as the breathing is repeated. This helps us to understand the mysterious process of memory. Some external influence acting on the senses produces an effect on the brain similar to that of the breath on the glass, reviving impressions made long before, the very existence of which was unsuspected, which no unaided mental effort could evoke. This is as true of a person with a good memory as of one with a bad one; the first has his "negatives" arranged in better order than the other, and by practice has accustomed himself to handle them frequently and revive the record with which they are charged.

It is difficult to overrate the advantage of rightly ordering and exercising the memory, so vastly is the value of life thereby enhanced both as a possession and as an instrument. This is indeed the highest form of culture, though, alas! modern methods of education seem devised to huddle into the brain the greatest possible number of impressions in the shortest possible time, rather than to allow leisure to store them so that they may be conveniently resorted to afterwards. This is the answer to the puzzle so often presenting itself, why so many "double firsts" subside in after-life into creatures of no more than average brilliancy. The knowledge is there, the impressions are there, but they have been crammed in in such hot haste and consequent confusion, piled

one upon the other, that it is only by chance that their owner derives any advantage from them in the conduct of life. Yet it would never occur to any reader to hesitate in choosing between a limited number of volumes conveniently arranged in shelves, and ten thousand heaped pell-mell on the library floor.

Some of the best work in the world has been done by those who were reckoned dullards at school and undistinguished at college. The fact is that the education of these only began when the harassing system of cramming came to an end. The value of knowledge consists not in possessing information, but in having it so arranged that it can be produced when the occasion requires.

If anybody doubts this, let him consider the case of a man who may be supposed to have received a deeper impression than any other of which human beings are susceptible—namely, one thoroughly in love. Depend upon it, that portion of brain-tissue impressed with his mistress's image is breathed upon pretty frequently in the course of each four-and-twenty hours. He can produce it at will, and, as often as he has a spare moment, out comes the mental photograph, and he revels in contemplation of the fair vision. He knows so exactly the spot occupied by this plate among the others, and is so accustomed to take it out for the solace of his soul, that even when the will is at rest and he asleep, trickles of thought flow over it, and Edwin dreams of his Angelina. But

it is only by poetic licence that he can declare she is *always* in his thoughts. She is nothing of the kind. If he is a proper lover she is oftener there than anything else; but were it true that his thoughts never turned aside from her image, the man would be a ninny, not a lover: he would forget to pull up his boots, to pay his servant's wages, to go out to dinner, or to attend to necessary business of any sort, and would probably be killed at the first crossing. But he is a devoted swain all the same, and proves it by the certainty with which, as often as his mind is free from other needful heed, he breathes on the glass, and straightway appears, not Phyllis or Amaryllis, not Lydia or Chloe, but Angelina.

As with the enamoured Edwin, so with the true lover whose mistress is Knowledge. There is no fear but that the plates are sensitive enough to receive all her impressions; the important matter is so to arrange them in the storehouse of the brain, that at any moment the breath of thought may be directed upon the right one to produce the image required. From Simonides of Cos, who lived five hundred years before Christ, down to our own day, men have busied themselves in devising mechanical aids to memory. Roger Bacon, Raymond Lully, Petrus de Ravenna, Lambert Schenkel (whose feats of memory were so extraordinary as to cause him to be persecuted as a sorcerer), Winckelmann, Leibnitz, Richard Grey, and many others, have propounded systems of mnemonics, in each one of which reliance seems to have been

mainly placed on eyesight as the only sure index, the influence of scent and sound being altogether ignored. The usual method prescribed by these masters was the wedding together of ideas, names, phrases, and events with visible objects, such as the buildings in a town, and especially with articles of furniture in the different rooms of a familiar house, so that the sight or recollection of each should evoke the image of the subject connected with it. Cicero mentions with approval the prescription of Simonides: "I owe thanks to Simonides of Cos, who, they say, first formulated the art of remembrance. . . . It is true that the natural faculty of memory cannot be created by such exercises if it does not exist; but undoubtedly, if it is latent, it can thereby be roused." When the Children of Israel passed over Jordan, Joshua made them set up twelve stones—"That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones?" they should hear the narrative associated with them.

It is a light thing, after venturing to demur to the utterance of so great a seer as Dante, that one should find himself at issue with one of Cicero's authority in this matter of memory: certainly the reflections put forward in this paper on the intimate connection of scent and sound with that faculty are at variance with the conclusions arrived at by the great orator. He confirms, in the "De Oratore," an observation by Simonides to the effect that those things fix themselves

most firmly in the mind which are supplied and confirmed by the senses. So far there is no difference between us; but it is not easy to follow him when he goes beyond Simonides, and lays it down that of all the senses, eyesight is the keenest and most to be relied on as the basis of memory. One longs to argue it out with him, and to ask if poetry itself does not owe its origin to the assistance which memory derives by rhyme and metre? If sound is not charged with association, how is it that the passions of men are so deeply stirred by music? What lashes a rabble into riot so surely as the "Marseillaise," with all its memories of blood and tears? What touches the heart of the exile to such tenderness as the songs of his native land? And how, even in this utilitarian, ultra-economic age, when the word has been passed to put down all panoply and display, can the maintenance of military bands be justified except by acknowledging the magic of chivalrous suggestion that exists in martial music?

It is to our loss that we neglect the training of all the senses as handmaids to memory, for to most of us it arrives, soon or late, to echo the sigh graven on the urn at Leasowes:

> "Heu! quanto minus est cum reliquis versari, quam tui meminisse."

("Woe is me! how much less it avails to converse with the living than to dwell on the memory of the departed!")

# IMAGINATION.

A DASH of paradox sometimes contributes the poignancy essential to a good aphorism. It acts like the etcher's acid, biting into the copper the lightest scratches of his needle and making them permanent. When Disraeli affirmed that, of all the attributes of a statesman, imagination was one of the most important, people perhaps thought he was trying to be original or funny. It seems so clear that in the routine of office-work—finance, diplomacy, patronage, the methodical conduct of business in Parliament—the less rein given to imagination the safer should be the management of affairs. Nobody, it might be urged, would intrust his private business to the hands of a dreamer of dreams; how much less commit the affairs of a nation to the care of a visionary!

This would be downright sound sense if imagination were nothing but reverie—had no more solid properties and fulfilled no more important functions than those commonly credited to it. But, rightly weighed, this

saying of Disraeli's will reveal unsuspected meaning. It is the observation of one long schooled in "the great principles of human experience," and deeply versed in the ways of men. What seems at first sight but glitter of phrase, shines forth as the steady flame of understanding. Everything depends on what meaning is attached to the term imagination. If, as is often wrongly done, it is restricted to an act of dreamy reflection, whereby unsubstantial visions are encouraged to throng the field of thought, then, as soon as it is a question of quick wit and ready hand, when unerring deed must follow close on kindling thought, men do well to look suspiciously on imaginative persons; but to take this view is to do wrong to that gift which, of all those we are endowed with, brings us most near to the Divine.

Imagination is a property indispensable in one who aspires to govern his fellow-men. Countless are the occasions in the ordinary work of administration when its presence will enable a ruler to carry his purpose without a blow struck; while, without it, one directing all the artillery of authority may lay a country in ruins, and deluge it with blood and tears—only to pave the avenue to his own fall. But its existence in the subjects is as important as in the ruler. The Western world soon wearied of its kings, when, walled about by ceremony and the exaggerated etiquette copied from oriental courts, they were made to stand so far apart from their people that the tide of intelligent sympathy between them had to meander through

artificial channels so many and so intricate that it grew cold and sluggish. Gibbon has traced the weakness of the Roman Empire to the day when Maximian, by withdrawing the Imperial Court to Milan from Rome, where the popular assembly held its sittings, dealt a mortal wound to the constitution; while his greater colleague, Diocletian, simultaneously made Nicomedia the seat of rule in the East. Hitherto the Emperor had been but the chief citizen; no special sanctity beyond what was conferred by the suffrages of his countrymen hedged him from easy though respectful access; his prerogative was as jealously limited by custom as by law. But as soon as he imitated the Persian monarchy in crowning himself with the diadem—hitherto unknown to Roman rulers—tedious forms, abject obeisance, difficult approach, were insisted on, deepening the awe, but diluting the affection that formerly moulded the relations between ruler and people. The gulf was made so broad that the popular imagination could not bridge it. It is well if it is less wide now between the cottars of Connemara and Windsor Castle—between dwellers in the New Cut and Balmoral?

Those responsible for the oriental social scheme were careful to avail themselves of safeguards impracticable among the free races of the West. Slavery might be relied on to carry out the most tyrannous edicts; and caste, if it was not a cunning contrivance on the principle *divide et impera*, was at all events a convenient machinery for severing one class of

subjects from all sympathy or co-operation with another.

With us the king could do no wrong, so long as he was near and among his people: but the moment Court officials ceased to be links and became barriers, the magic current was interrupted, he had to rely on ministers as interpreters, and the first fool in office brought about the crash. Charles I., by nature gentle and considerate, would have shrunk from intentional oppression; but it required a stronger imagination than his to realise the hardships inflicted in his name, and he paid the penalty. Thereafter the monarch must be restricted to reigning; ministers were to rule, but still it was woe to the minister whose imagination halted.

Who can trace the course of events leading up to the revolt of the American colonies without cursing Lord North's somnolence and bemoaning the obstinacy with which he re-enacted the blunders of the preceding century? Of course it may be urged in the minister's defence that this was the first time that a British colony had grown so powerful as to be able to defy the home Government—that there was no parallel experience in British history to guide him. Precisely! experience is much, but it is not all; it can never stand in the stead of the divine flash which illumines the true course through a dilemma — of imagination, that is to say, the power of forming with indescribable swiftness a true mental image of the result of calculated causes.

Experience cannot count for much in a youth of four-and-twenty, but William Pitt became Prime Minister at that age, and has never been excelled in the sagacious courage he brought to a great undertaking. He possessed that faculty which, being akin to divination, enables sagacity to outrun and dispense with experience, creates an intuitive sympathy with untried conditions of life, and confers foreknowledge of human motive.

If, then, imagination be of such value in the conduct of human affairs, it is a property worth developing, training, strengthening, and regulating; but before attempting to do so, it will be well to ascertain what is the nature of the subject with which it is proposed to deal. Most philosophers who have discussed and attempted to analyse imagination, have failed to give a satisfactory explanation of it, apparently because it is generally assumed to be a separate faculty, a province of the brain, either independent of other mental powers or specially connected with one of them. Thus Hume and Malebranche pronounce it to be a form of memory; Addison is of opinion that it depends upon eyesight for its existence, because "we cannot have a single image in the fancy that did not make its first entrance through the sight." Locke separates it from judgment, holding that while imagination grasps resemblance, judgment deals with difference. But it has been reserved for a modern writer to put into a single sentence a truer definition of imagination than is to be found in the

writings of all who have troubled themselves with metaphysics.

"Imagination is but a name for the free play of thought, one of the most important features of which, but still only one, is its attachment and sensibility to the memories of sight."[1] There is the whole root of the matter. Imagination is not a thing by itself, but a mental quality akin to physical agility, enabling the reason to act with greater velocity and certainty, intensifying faith, quickening conscience, rendering memory more vivid, sympathy more sure, judgment more certain. Every intellectual quality is intensified for good or for evil by imagination.

"There is nothing," writes George Eliot, "more widely misleading than sagacity if it happens to get on the wrong scent; and sagacity, persuaded that men usually act and speak from distinct motives, with a consciously proposed end in view, is certain to waste its energies on imaginary game."

Imagination, on the homœopathic principle, is the surest influence to preserve sagacity from following the scent of "imaginary game"; but it is a formidable power, imposing great risks, as well as high privilege, on its possessor. Of the former, an anecdote which occurs somewhere in Sir Walter Scott's writings is a good illustration:—

"An Italian nobleman, suffering from ague, was inveigled by his valet into such a situation as involved a ducking and a severe fright. The valet's intention was good—

[1] The Gay Science, by E. S. Dallas (London, 1866), i. 262.

namely, to cure his master's disease; and the cure was effectual. But his master, determined to punish him appropriately for the trick, had him tried for his life and sentenced to decapitation. He was led to the scaffold blindfolded, and laid his head on the block, when the executioner, acting on his instructions, dashed a jugful of cold water on his neck. The joke was then complete; but poor Gonella did not see it, for it was found that he had died from the shock to his nerves."

In other words, his imagination had killed him.

A trivial instance of the kind of second-sight supplied by imagination takes place as I write these lines. I happen to be travelling in an express train on the Great Western Railway, full of gratitude to that excellent company for the luxury in which I am carried at high speed on this bright summer day through the fair English champaign. It is pleasant, in the intervals of scribbling, to rest the eyes on voluptuous hedgerows and breadths of springing corn, on breezy downs and velvety woodlands. But for the last half-hour I have been tempted to irritation by some passengers in a forward carriage who find amusement in trailing a newspaper on a long string from their carriage-window. It has been dancing and flapping against the panes of my compartment in the most exasperating way, interfering with the view of the landscape, and wholly infringing upon my privilege as a first-class passenger. Just now I am specially anxious to get a good view of the White Horse on Uffington Hill—the confounded sheet has spread itself over the glass,

and for the twentieth time I am on the point of seizing the wretched paper and breaking the string. But it flashes across my mind that at the other end of the string there are probably a couple of children, whose pastime gives them more pleasure than it gives me annoyance; and if I put an end to it (as I have a perfect right to do), those in charge of them would in turn have to suffer from their restlessness. So I refrain; and even while I am revolving these trifles in my mind, we run into Swindon Junction, and my journey is at an end. In this case imagination was a medium of information which no other faculty could have supplied, and in the more important affairs of life it is often of advantage to know what is going on at the distant end of the string.

A healthy, vigorous imagination is the best possible safeguard against despondency about human nature. Thereby a man understands that every lofty thought or noble aspiration which thrills him is the common property of his fellows, and he will be slow to impute unworthy motives to others. To quote George Eliot once more — "Plotting covetousness and deliberate contrivance, in order to compass a selfish end, are nowhere abundant but in the world of the dramatist; they demand too intense a mental action for many of our fellow-parishioners to be guilty of them."

In a recent number of one of the more serious weeklies, there was a paper entitled "Small Meannesses," which gave an unpleasant glimpse into the

mental process of the "unco guid." To deplore the imperfection of human nature is part of the moralist's proper work; but he has other and not less important functions, and (not to put it too high) the general effect is more artistic when these are allowed some influence in leading to a judgment.

The writer of this essay on "Small Meannesses" begins by the sweeping assertion — "One of the most curious and unpleasant characteristics of human nature is its inability to resist the temptation of fraud, should ever an opportunity of wrongful possession, without the possibility of detection or punishment, present itself."

Is this the mournful case? Of all the gleamless dogmas of fatalism this is surely the most sorrowful. Happily it is as groundless as it is unpleasant. There are mean natures, of course, just as there are cowardly and cruel and deceitful natures; but surely it is not the case that, if a man carelessly leaves on his dressing-table an uncounted handful of gold or silver, his valet is *certain* to slip one of the sovereigns into his waistcoat-pocket, because it would be almost impossible to detect or punish him. The chance of detecting a morning caller's theft (and there are many traces of human nature even in morning callers) is even less than in the case of a servant; yet a lady may still, with reasonable safety, allow valuable knick-knacks to lie about on drawing-room tables.

Take the two instances given by our essayist as *ex ungue leonem*. The first is that of an entertainment

given during the summer of 1891 in aid of a charity by the Benchers of the Middle Temple. It was found that owing to a licence not having been taken out in time, the committee would have been acting illegally in taking a price for the tickets; consequently the visitors received their money back at the door, with a request that they would forward it direct to the managers of the charity. Some weeks after, a gentleman writes to the papers complaining that the fund is still considerably short of the amount which should have been remitted if everybody had paid up punctually, upon which the hebdomadal moralist works himself into a paroxysm of virtue, and asks what hope there can be for humanity when a number of well (? expensively) dressed people thus conspire to defraud a charity. But charity, in its fuller sense, would take into account the ease with which small debts are overlooked or postponed at the busiest season of the social year (especially when, as in the case in question, it is impossible to send reminders), and imagination would read in "small meanness" only forgetfulness writ large.

In the other case, however, there could be no mistake about the evil intention. A "gentleman" escorting a lady home in a hansom cab, left her at her house, and told the cabman to drive to another address: before reaching it he stopped the cab, asked the driver what the fare was, and on being told 5s. 6d., said generously, "Make it six bob!" pressed three coins into his hand, and disappeared in the darkness.

The cabman discovered immediately that the coins were not florins but coppers, and being naturally unwilling to be bilked, had recourse to a stratagem which implies something akin to genius. He drove straight back to the lady's house, told her that her friend had enormously overpaid him, and as he (cabby) was sure there was a mistake, begged her to let him know the gentleman's address. The result was the bringing of a rascal to justice. But how childish—rather, how old-womanish—it is to offer the conduct of this crepuscular scamp as an average sample of the way people in general treat cabmen! Nine men out of ten habitually and purposely overpay them. The legal fare in London is one shilling for two miles: he who would give less than eighteenpence between South Kensington station and Westminster Bridge, must be one who is forced by circumstances to look not only at both sides of a coin before parting with it, but at the nicks too.

There is a compact little sentence in one of Mr Birrel's "Obiter Dicta"—other essayists please copy—"The spots in the sun may be an interesting study, but anyhow the sun is not all spots." A right imagination will behold

> "Men—not animals erect—but mortal gods;

it will not dwell on human failure and error, but will rejoice with the angels at every conquest of difficulty, at every triumph over temptation and weakness.

It is not study, nor is it training only, that gives this affinity to what is noble in others; it is the spontaneous action of imagination imparting that quality which our great-grandmothers termed sensibility. Still, training is responsible for a great deal: the power of sympathy may be brought out or dwarfed according to the encouragement given and the example set to it. One is painfully familiar with the odious phrases uttered year after year when the annual harvest of English art is ripe. "Been to the Academy? Poor show, isn't it?"—"Shocking set of daubs!"—"There's hardly a picture fit to look at"—"Should be hung faces to the wall," &c. Young people are encouraged to go to Burlington House in an adversely critical spirit; to look out for faults instead of anticipating beauty. What an opportunity is here lost of exalting the imagination by leading a young mind to comprehend the painter's enterprise, realise his patient toil, and sympathise with his success (in truth there is always plenty of this last), leaving the garbage of failure to be snarled over by narrower souls! What a pure source of pleasure is poisoned by this carping habit—the pleasure of reading nature interpreted by accomplished hands! What reverence is discouraged—the reverence for laborious and intricate handicraft! Train a youth going to one of these exhibitions to look out for what pleases him, for what he can admire; he will soon find that he has no time for displeasure with shortcomings. Mr Morley quotes and translates a sentence of Diderot's

on this matter: "I am more affected by the charms of virtue than by the deformity of vice. I turn mildly away from the bad, and I fly to embrace the good. If there is in a work, in a character, in a painting, in a statue, a single fine bit, then on that my eyes fasten: I see only that: that is all I remember: the rest is as good as forgotten." Again, in one of his letters to Mlle. Voland, Diderot exclaims: "Why be silent about the good qualities, and only pick out the defects? There is in all that a kind of envy that wounds me—me, who read men as I read authors, and never burden my memory except with things that are good to know and good to remember."

Pope was also of this mind:—

> "A perfect judge will read each work of wit
> With the same spirit that its author writ;
> Survey the whole, nor seek slight faults to find
> Where nature moves and rapture warms the mind."

Many people have found difficulty in endorsing Pope's estimate of Akenside as a poet. When the author of the 'Pleasures of Imagination' offered his manuscript to Dodsley the publisher for £120, the latter asked Pope's advice before closing on the bargain, and the verdict was favourable to Akenside,—"For here," said Pope, "you have no everyday writer." The impression left on the reader of to-day by the perusal of that, Akenside's chief work, is that the bard was something deficient in the very faculty which he celebrated in several hundred lines of the blankest of blank verse. Nevertheless the source of

sympathy between the two poets may have been the generosity with which Akenside always regarded the accomplishment of others. He did not speak contemptuously of painters and their work, but gratefully and reverently, as of those who

> "With easier hand
> Describing lines, and with more ample scope
> Uniting colours, can to general sight
> Produce those permanent and perfect forms,
> Those characters of heroes and of gods
> Which form the crude materials of the world
> Their own high minds created."

As in art, so in the conduct of life: tuned to the proper pitch, a young mind will respond to the teaching of a higher authority than Pope, and will unconciously draw to itself "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely." "Unconsciously!" demurs the theologian; but this *is* conscience." Well, we will not dispute about terms, for to some it will always seem hard to define the difference between conscience and trained imagination. A chemist will suspend a common iron key in a vat containing double cyanide of gold and potassium: it might hang in the solution till the crack of doom and never be anything but an iron key; but thrill its molecules with the current from a Daniell cell, and lo! the homely little object begins to draw to itself all the precious metal out of the surrounding fluid, clothing itself with gold, so that henceforth it

shall take rank among the aristocracy of keys, and be for ever secure against rust or corrosion.

True education consists in directing upon the growing mind that influence which, like the electric current on the key, gives it a ceaseless affinity to noble impression and aspiration, and is as different in method as it is in result from the prevailing system of "cram," which, for any permanent end, is about as fruitless as trying to gild the key by burying it in a bag of dry gold.

Think how the enjoyment of life is deepened and widened by the cultivation of this faculty; how many a poor little horizon has been illumined by the splendours of imagination! He who possesses it moves, indeed, in a light to which the eyes of others may be blind, yet they are conscious of the radiance reflected from him; but colloquial English is so *mesquin* that all they can say of him is that he is "clever."

We have no other word to express that quality which enables, nay impels, a mind to extract precious essence from commonplace surroundings. It is from such a mind that criticism distils, not as a corrosive and defacing acid, but a cleansing, sparkling source of refreshment. We have literary parasites on the heroic scale of Thomas Warton, who, so far from weakening the authors on whom they feed, make them nobler and more satisfying to less gifted students: just as a mounted horse suffers no disadvantage from the weight of his rider, but will go farther and faster than one without a load, so poets

and moralists gain in effect when subjected to the play of a just critic's imagination.

Baron Stosch laboured hard to prove that the human soul was nothing but a little glue; he would have been nearer the mark in declaring that it was a slumbering fire capable of being nursed and fanned into a clear flame. One possessed of such a power of penetrating the surface and solving the substance of things, can never, unless condemned to solitary confinement, be dull; even Ovid was probably not so utterly wretched in his exile at Tomi as he endeavoured to make us believe; rest assured that his thoughts were busy enough with what was passing round him. "Le repos," said Voltaire, "est une bonne chose, mais l'ennui est son frère;" but a man of quick imagination, not debarred from intercourse with men and women, will never droop from ennui except such as arises from indigestion. Is the imaginative person among dull people — their very dulness will be a source of amused speculation to him; even if he is doomed to be with lovers—his own thoughts are not handcuffed by passion or self-interest, and, as an onlooker, he sees most of the game.

Greatly as this faculty is to be prized and richly as it responds to cultivation, it lays a character open to peculiar dangers. Though a powerful ally to generosity and mercy, it is a treacherous companion to courage, requiring constant watchfulness to prevent it so vividly portraying danger or suffering as to

suggest or strengthen apprehension. To realise other less serious risks besetting it, one has only to compare the characters and lives of some of those endowed with it above the common. Honoré de Balzac, the novelist, offers an extreme instance of vivid but undisciplined imagination. It is not only that he allowed himself to live in a perpetual moonlight of hallucination, under the glamour of which he wandered into a labyrinth of debt and anxiety out of which he never found a way: that only affected his own happiness, or, to speak more accurately, only that of those personally concerned with him, for he was wonderfully waterproofed against despondency by the intense realism of his fancy. He used to delude himself with the belief that he was living in affluence, and straightway he positively derived through his imagination all the pleasures that could be conveyed by riches; so that, except at the moments when he was actually flying from his creditors, a comfortless and anxious life was transformed for him into one of perfect content and limitless possibility. The means by which he imposed upon himself were ludicrously simple. Mr Leslie Stephen has described the manner in which, being heavily in debt, Balzac managed to furnish and decorate Les Jardies, a cottage which he built for himself in the suburbs of Paris: "He inscribed in one place on the bare walls of his house, 'Ici un revêtement de marbre de Paros'; in another, 'Ici un plafond peint par Eugène Delacroix'; in a third, 'Ici des portes, façon Trianon,'" and so on; and if we are to believe

the testimony of those who knew him, he derived as much satisfaction from this childish device as he could have done from the gorgeous reality. In short, he carried into effect the delusion described in Praed's "Love and Hope"—

> "When poverty beset their path
> And threatened to divide them,
> They coaxed away the beldame's wrath
> Ere she had breath to chide them,
> By vowing all her rags were silk,
> And all her bitters honey,
> And showing taste for bread and milk,
> And utter scorn of money."

But a mind so saturated with sham could not produce wholesome fruit. Balzac's novels oppress one like the nightmare. 'La Comédie Humaine' is a series of scenes in a God-forgotten, hope-deserted, dread-haunted world: the author portrays plenty of sacrifice—of the virtuous and gentle by the evil and cruel; but he offers no picture of the chief ordeal of nobility—self-sacrifice; he exhibits all the savage temper of the tragedian, without the tenderness essential to the production of perfect art—all the cynicism of the vivisector undisturbed by the misgivings of sympathy. Even in those parts of his writings which approach most nearly to tenderness, the sentiment is like the night-wind—

> "Wafting wallflower scents
> From out the crumbling ruin of false hopes
> And chambers of transgression now forlorn."

He insisted that Parisian society was a festering mass

of corruption, and that innocent lives were irredeemably at the mercy of selfish, libidinous, and avaricious monsters; yet he is always invoking his reader's admiration for what was to him the only city in the world. "O Paris! qui n'a pas admiré tes sombres paysages, tes échappées de lumière, tes culs-de-sac profonds et silencieux; qui n'a pas entendu tes murmures entre minuit et deux heures du matin, ne connait encore rien de ta vraie poésie, ni de tes bizarres et larges contrastes."

But even his adoration for the beloved Paris was part of the sham, and in moments of intimacy he would allow his mask to slip aside and reveal the angry resentful features of a disappointed man. He would at such times take a friend to a spot at Les Jardies whence a view of the city might be had, exclaiming, "Venez! allons cracher sur Paris!"

Listen to the despairing confession that he allowed to flow from his pen at the moment when his cherished illusions turned to dust: "Les belles âmes arrivent difficilement à croire aux mauvais sentiments, à la trahison, à l'ingratitude; quand leur éducation est faite en ce genre, elles s'élèvent alors à une indulgence qui est peut-être le dernier degré de mépris pour l'humanité."

It is refreshing to turn from poor Balzac's record to that of another of the demigods of imagination. Just at the time when the first volumes of 'La Comédie Humaine' appeared, another long series of fiction was drawing to its close, not inferior to the Frenchman's

work in graphic description and illusory spell, but, unlike his, exalting the aims and refining the pleasures of mankind, though without prudishly screening its frailty and failure. Sir Walter Scott's money troubles were on a scale which dwarfs those of Balzac to insignificance; and though the two men agree in this, that neither of them permitted anxiety or embarrassment to dull his imagination or damp his energy, one of them confronted disaster with virile resolution to repair it, while the other simply refused to acknowledge it, created an imaginary credit to balance liabilities which were themselves to a great extent illusory, and had recourse to the vulgar device of evasion.

The epithet "vulgar" calls to mind an incident recorded by Lockhart in his 'Life of Scott' (which, be it said in passing, remains, in spite of the host of competitors which the taste for that class of literature has produced, the masterpiece of biography in this century):—

> "Sir Walter Scott's daughter once spoke in his hearing of something she could not endure because it was vulgar. 'My dear,' replied her father, 'you speak like a very young lady. Do you know, after all, the meaning of this word *vulgar?* It is only *common;* nothing that is common, except wickedness, can deserve to be spoken of with contempt. When you have lived to my years, you will be disposed to agree with me in thanking God that nothing really worth having or caring about in this world is *uncommon.*'"

In this sentence, perhaps, may be recognised the key-

note of Scott's genius. His sympathy with the aspirations, the temptations, the shortcomings, and the disappointments of his fellow-men was so complete, his mind was so thoroughly *manly*, that he was able out of everyday material to create thoroughly wholesome and ennobling images. His villains are black enough, but their dye is not allowed to suffuse every page; vice persists, but is not permitted to prevail, and the reader is not oppressed by the dreary feeling that, do what we may, evil governs the world, and it is neither pleasant nor profitable to be virtuous, or true, or chaste, or unselfish. In Scott's universe there is God above and heaven before us; in Balzac's there is neither — nothing but vindictive fate inhabiting a vault of bewilderment. To lay down 'L'Histoire des Treize' or 'Le Père Goriot,' and to take up 'Quentin Durward' or 'The Antiquary,' is to pass from the exhausted air and unfragrant thoroughfares of a city to leafy lanes and summer hillsides.

There is not more difference between the work of these two masters and its influence on the imagination of millions, than there is between the place each of the two men now holds in the affection of mankind. The name of Honoré de Balzac can scarcely be pronounced without a smile, recalling, as it does, a career of gasconade, of make-shift and make-believe. But through all his embarrassment Walter Scott never forgot his dignity: popular though his writings have been almost beyond precedent, that which his countrymen

cherish even more fondly is the memory of his kindly quaint ways, his unswerving integrity, and above all, his firm faith in the good that is in human nature. Balzac's imagination was most penetrating, but it was deficient in scope; dwelling almost exclusively on the evil side of humanity, its pinions never carried him to the purer levels of life; but Scott's raised him to that helpful understanding of his fellow-men which has been epitomised in the saying—"*Comprendre—c'est tout pardonner.*"

A very common fault in modern literature—especially fiction—is too minute description of gesture, too laborious exposition of feeling and motive. Every one is familiar with one characteristic of the journalism of the present day which spares no detail of dress or feature of public men; but after all, journalism is a record: it may be as important to be informed that Lord Salisbury wore a black frock-coat and shepherd's-plaid trousers in the House of Lords last week, as that Mr Fox wore a blue coat and buff waistcoat in the House of Commons last century. But it is altogether intolerable that this practice should be carried into fiction in a degree insulting to the reader's imagination and injurious to his understanding. There is a fine contrast between the naïve, almost bald narrative of such a work as Prévost's 'Manon Lescaut,' and the unctuous, overloaded pages of the average modern novel. The genuine artist is not careful to explain all

the motives and dissect all the emotions of his characters; he knows it is his business to tell his tale clearly, be it in fifty pages or five hundred, relying on the events he has to describe being capable of engaging attention, and crediting his reader with enough imagination to supply much that might be written between the lines. The truth is, that, although he might not like to be told it, the modern analytic writer is far more matter-of-fact than the old-fashioned synthetic one, because he labours to explain everything as if he doubted his readers having any imagination at all. One gets exasperated with him, and constantly feels inclined to exclaim, "You ass! I can see *that* without your telling me." He blunders as unpardonably as a host who insists on drawing his guest's attention to the excellence of his dishes and the high quality of his wines. It is not the business of a writer to show the fine feats of his own imagination, but to stimulate that of his readers.

To illustrate this modern vice of over-description, here is a passage from a novel opened at random—a novel not selected for the present purpose, but literally the nearest to hand among a row in the club from the circulating library:—

"Delicacy more than beauty was the charm of the woman's face. The expression was wistful and abstracted, with something of glacial austerity in its purity, and a coldness of pride in the pointed chin, and the way her head was set on a long and slender throat, that awed. Her arms were bare, rounded and white like a child's or very young

girl's, though extreme youthfulness was not the claim of her grave proud face. Her neck, too, was softly but slenderly filled in, unadorned by gem or flowers, and so white as to suggest the want of red blood in her veins. The colour and texture of her gown, pale blue of gossamery stuff, full in fold and much be-ribboned and flounced, added to the pictorial unreality of her extreme fairness, as did her brown hair worn high and loosely coiled, with a pearl crescent catching its topmost roll," &c., &c., &c.

Now compare with this verbiage the style in which l'Abbé Prévost, in the above-mentioned romance of 'Manon Lescaut,' enlists admiration for his heroine. Indeed it is not easy to find any passage in which she *is* described. One reads page after page of this fascinating story, and is penetrated with the sense of Manon's beauty and charm, in spite of the fact that the author nowhere tells so much as the colour of her eyes and hair. The reader's imagination has been encouraged to fill in the outlines for himself. The description approaching most nearly to detail is given in the Chevalier Desgrieux's own words. It is after he has given up Manon, returned to Saint-Sulpice, and made his oration in the School of Theology. He has not seen his old mistress for more than a year, and is manfully striving to forget all about her in preparing for the sacred calling chosen for him. He is told that a lady has called to see him, and he goes to the parlour to wait upon her:—

"Dieu! quelle apparition surprenante! j'y trouvai Manon. C'était elle, mais plus aimable et plus brillante que je ne

l'avais jamais vue. Elle était dans sa dix-huitième année : ses charmes surpassaient tout ce qu'on peut décrire : c'était un air si fin, si doux, si engageant ! l'air de l'amour même. Toute sa figure me parut un enchantement."

That is all—practically all the personal description given of what every one who has read the romance will agree is one of the most fascinating female characters in fiction.

By condescending to superfluous detail, a writer forfeits the respect which he should be very jealous to secure. Authors aspire to control and direct opinion : it is at their peril that they forget that rulers betray themselves when they stoop to familiarity. If they are to maintain their authority, there must be no visible anxiety to please ; they should rather invite others to share their prerogative of understanding, than step down from their dais to gossip in corridors or at street corners. This is the kind of pride which Chamfort declared includes all the commandments of God ; whereas to show how cleverly trivial details may be explained is part of the vanity which, he said, contains the seven deadly sins.

The deterioration of fiction has its counterpart in the new journalism. Editors of old were careful that their leader-writers should be shrouded in the sonorous "we." Judgment delivered by veiled prophets carried far more weight than the same sentences delivered by a visible, perhaps insignificant-looking, individual "slinging ink" for a livelihood, and shrewd anonymity appealed powerfully to the imagination.

But it is one of the signs of democratic times that an ever-increasing number of people are deeply interested in the movements of fashionable or wealthy people, and it has been found that a fascinating sense of familiarity with modish circles is conveyed by substituting the first person singular for the first person plural. The writer talks airily of the doings of great folks, takes his readers into his confidence, and, by implication, associates them with the characters in his chronicle. Their imagination is agreeably stirred by such paragraphs as these:—

"I am delighted to see that the young Duchess of Manylands has thrown off all traces of her severe attack of influenza. She was looking quite her best on Friday night at Lady Bellastre's smart little dance, and looked fascinating in a costume of white *duchesse* satin, with ribbons of grasshopper green and rose pink, and a coquettish bunch of ostrich-feathers on one shoulder."

"So Lord Tunbridge has made up his mind at last. I really thought that long-talked-of Canadian trip would never come off; but he tells me that he really sails next week in the Umbria, and with him go 'Froggy' Desborough and 'Toler' Macdonald."

One of the most formidable instances of the sway wielded by an individual over masses of his fellows, without the aid of religious excitement, is that of Wallenstein, Duke of Friedland and Mecklenburg, who commanded the Emperor Ferdinand's forces in

the Thirty Years' War. Although it is true that the struggle was one between Catholics and Protestants, Wallenstein's troops were drawn from all parts of Europe, attracted by prospect of pay and booty, and not to be suspected of devotional fervour. His military capacity and great wealth would doubtless have proved enough in themselves to make him remarkable; but it was his austere personality, enhanced by the exaggerated ceremony on which he insisted, that exalted him into an object of superstitious dread, and made his power unrivalled while it lasted, by means of the impression on the imagination of those whom he ruled:—

"Wallenstein's appearance," writes Michiels, "was enough in itself to inspire fear and respect. His tall thin figure, his haughty attitude, the stern expression of his pale face, his wide forehead that seemed formed to command, his black hair, close-shorn and harsh, his little dark eyes, in which the flame of authority shone, his haughty and suspicious look, his thick moustaches and tufted beard, produced at the first glance a striking sensation. . . . Whilst his army devoted itself to pleasure the deepest silence reigned around the general. He could not endure the rumbling of carts, loud conversations, or even simple sounds. One of his chamberlains was hanged for waking him without orders, and an officer was secretly put to death because his spurs clanked when he came to the general. His servants glided about the room like phantoms, and a dozen patrols incessantly moved round his tent or palace to maintain perpetual tranquillity. Chains were also stretched across the streets in order to guard him against any sound. . . . He was never seen to smile, and his pride rendered

him inaccessible to sensual pleasures. . . . When he gave any orders or explanations he could not bear to be looked at curiously ; when he crossed the camp the soldiers were obliged to pretend they did not see him. Yet they experienced an involuntary shudder when they saw him pass like a supernatural being. . . . He walked alone, surrounded by this magic influence like a saddening halo."

Thus, if Disraeli was right in declaring imagination to be necessary in a ruler, it is not less true that it has to be reckoned with in the ruled. The example of Wallenstein may seem to be at variance with what has been said above about weakening the influence of rulers by increasing the gulf between them and those they should rule, but the difference here is that Wallenstein was always present with and visible to his armies.

Besides the action of imagination which exalts a favourite politician into a popular hero, whose every saying and movement commands attention, there is a most practical and commonplace result, which makes people willing to be heavily taxed for imaginary enjoyment. For example, the pleasures of tobacco are shrewdly analysed by one of the characters in the Memoirs of Jacques Cazanova (a book remarkable for better qualities than its outrageous profligacy). Josouff, a Russian Jew, "qui fumait en Turc, c'est-à-dire sans cracher," utters some reflections which the experience of every smoker will confirm :—

"Écoute ! le principal plaisir de fumer consiste dans la vue de la fumée. Tu ne dois jamais la voir sortir de la bouche, mais toute du coin de la bouche, à distances

mésurées et jamais trop fréquentes. Il est si vrai que ce plaisir est le principal que tu ne verras nulle part un aveugle fumer. Essais toi-même de fumer dans ta chambre la nuit sans lumière ; un moment après avoir allumé ta pipe tu la mettras bas."

Nobody can smoke in the dark; so it seems as if Josouff's explanation is correct, that the chief pleasure consists in watching the puffs—a pleasure, in fact, of the imagination. What are the people of this country willing to pay for this pleasure? In 1890 the amount of duty paid on about 46,000,000 lb. of imported tobacco was no less than £9,214,627; and allowing twelve pipefuls to every ounce, we arrive at the astounding total of 8,849,041,000 pipes consumed by a population of 38,000,000. The mere increase in duty paid over the preceding year was nearly half a million, representing 560,000,000 pipes more in 1890 than in 1889. In view of these stupendous figures, which themselves almost transcend imagination, what Chancellor of the Exchequer can henceforth disregard the imagination of the people as a chief factor in filling the national coffers?

As an agent to make life sweeter and better, the imaginative power is capable of infinite extension by education. Each new avenue of intelligence opened admits it to the influence of fresh delight. It is rather humiliating that the experience of so many ages of civilisation has not enabled us to decide on the best curriculum; many are crying out against

the prescription of the classics, complaining that we sacrifice our children's time and pains to acquiring a knowledge of dead languages which should be devoted to modern literature, science, and art. Monsieur Guyau is perhaps the most intelligible exponent of the opposite view, defending classical education on the ground that the true object is not the acquirement of useful knowledge but intellectual development; to form heads, as Montesquieu said, not to fill them. It is a question not easy to decide; but one thing seems clear, that it is a grievous imperfection in upper-class education that it should be radically different for the two sexes. To store a boy's mind with the philosophy of Greek and Roman sages, to instil into him the charm of classic poetry and illusion, and to leave him to choose a companion for life from among girls who have been carefully excluded from such knowledge; and, conversely, while girls are taught music and modern languages as a matter of course, to leave it to pure chance whether a boy acquires any instruction at all in these—seems to be a system devised to hinder rather than encourage the quick sympathy essential to perfect union. When two young persons enter the state of matrimony, it is in compliance with a mutual impulse of harmony; each invests the other with ideal attributes which can never, in the imperfection of human nature, be fully realised. But the chill of disappointment has been carefully prepared by a scheme of education which has trained the thoughts of husband and wife to run

in different channels, and accustomed the intellect of each to slake its thirst at sources inaccessible to the other. Such refreshment is a necessity; what wonder, then, if minds which ought to move together often grow accustomed to seek their relaxation separately? Companionship postulates common understanding; it is to be deplored that the present system provides so little common ground.

More careful culture of the imagination would put an end once and for all to slipshod habits in writing or speech. Emerson said that "in a letter any expressions may be abbreviated rather than those of respect and kindness: never write 'Yours aff'ly.'" But, be it said with all respect, this smacks of pedantry. The close of a letter is mere formula, and is precisely that part which, in writing to a friend, may without risk of misunderstanding be cut short or dispensed with: between friends *ça va sans dire.* But no degree of familiarity palliates careless expressions in the letter itself; and a common mark of disrespect which, by the rules of ordinary courtesy should be discountenanced, is to finish with the words "in haste." Oftener than not, they are used insincerely: the writer has really plenty of time to write what he has to say, but he feels it is rather a bore, and so permits himself a liberty which he would never venture upon if, instead of corresponding, he were to meet his acquaintance in the street. If a correspondent is worth addressing, he is worth the few minutes required to express one's self with ordinary

consideration: it is not flattering to him to feel that you are in haste, for that only means, in most cases, that you are in haste to be done with him. Written words stand by themselves; the tone of voice and the glance of the eye, which often convey more than half the meaning, are not there as footnotes; many and many an unintentional sting has been planted by a clumsy phrase or halting expression.

The same principle holds good in conversation. Considering what a beautiful instrument is speech, and how closely it may express every thought and fear and hope, it is astonishing how awkwardly and carelessly it is employed. A good talker — not a profuse conversationalist nor an orator, but one who expresses himself in clear and simple words—imparts so much pleasure, that it is much to be regretted that the species is so rare. And the value we set upon such a one is not solely because he tickles our ears agreeably; the imagination at once, and rightly, connects distinct articulation and appropriate words as indicative of intellectual clearness and vigour; if the thoughts are not powerful and well ordered, the speech will be awkward and blundering. Men of great mental power may be insignificant in person and homely in feature, but they are almost always remarkable for lucidity of expression. St Paul may have justly described his own presence as weak, but he probably did himself an injustice when he added that his speech was contemptible. There is, however, one exception to this rule. Literary men, accustomed

to express their thoughts by mechanical contrivance instead of by the natural organs, often come far short of a satisfactory standard of elocution.

There is one sweetener of society which, perhaps above all others, depends on a quick imagination, and that is chivalry. It has its rules, no doubt; but they have never been written, at least they are observed by men (especially some in humble life) who never can have read them; and they must be *felt*, not uttered.

Chivalry implies forgetfulness of self and consideration of others, and cannot exist save where the imagination is trained and lively. As this paper begins with allusion to a saying of Mr Disraeli's, it may fitly conclude with reference to an incident in that statesman's life affording an apt illustration of the charm which the spirit of chivalry infuses into everyday life. Mr Gladstone was delivering an attack in the House of Commons upon the administration of Mr Disraeli. He had begun a sentence—"The right honourable gentleman and his satellites"—when some interruption threw him out; he came to a stop, and seemed on the point of breaking down. Disraeli leaned across the table and repeated the word "satellites," whereupon his adversary at once recollected himself and resumed his invective.

There must always be "sides" in this life. "If there were no difference of opinion there would be no fancy waistcoats." It is good to be reminded some-

times that there is still room in the long-drawn conflict for sympathy of chivalrous spirits.

A friendly critic, looking through the proof-sheets of this paper, has just remarked that it is so rambling that it requires a good deal of imagination to imagine that the subject of it is imagination. The thrust is fair enough; my retort is that their purpose has been served if these paragraphs, however loosely thrown together, have reminded the reader that imagination sometimes does what no other faculty can accomplish.

# PLEASURE.

WHEN Sainte-Beuve published his romance 'Volupté,' he showed some solicitude for the scruples of those who might take alarm at such an equivocal title, explaining to them frankly in the Preface that his book, though written with a serious moral purpose, was not meant for those who were too strait-laced to have feeling for human foibles. At the same time, he dismissed rather contemptuously those who might be lured to peruse it by the very same appearance of evil that scared graver minds, remarking that he did not concern himself though they would certainly be disappointed. Montaigne, on the other hand, anticipating Helvetius by three centuries in declaring that, even in virtue, the principal aim of man is pleasure, found a mischievous delight in scandalising prudes. "Il me plaist de battre leurs aureilles de ce mot (la volupté) qui leur est si fort à contre-cœur:"—I delight in dinning into their ears this word which is so odious to them.

Of the two examples, that of Sainte-Beuve is the safer for a writer in these days to follow, and to acknowledge that the word which stands at the head of this page is one of doubtful reputation. It has been too often seen in bad company; *noscitur a sociis* —it is looked on askance by steady-going people, as if it were a synonym for revelry, debauchery, promiscuous junketings, horse-racing, card-playing, and suchlike.

Towards the close of last century there was started the 'Sporting Magazine,' which ran a career, neither inglorious nor unprofitable to the publishers, for upwards of seventy years. The title-page of the earlier numbers undertakes that "the Turf, the Chace, and every other Diversion interesting to the Man of Pleasure" will be fully dealt with. It must be confessed that some of the contents of this magazine in its youthful days were such as to favour the sinister significance of the term "Man of Pleasure"; for the editor took a catholic view of sport, and not only interlarded the records of the chase with annals of the cock-pit and the prize-ring, and realistic descriptions of public executions, but, in certain paragraphs headed "Matrimonial Sporting," admitted detailed accounts of the raciest *crim. con.* and abduction cases. This gave the lover of legitimate sport a bad start. A periodical conducted on such loose lines might well strengthen the opinion held by some serious persons that all sport involves disreputable associations, and helped, no doubt, to bring it about that many

people in this country still think and speak coyly of pleasure, as if it were in itself a hurtful or obnoxious thing.

Nevertheless, rightly understood, pleasure is the chief object of all human government — the art, namely, of making people pleased or happy; and it would not be less rational to condemn religion because of the cruelties that have been inflicted in its name, or art because some good pictures have an immoral tendency, as to inveigh against pleasure because some people pursue it selfishly or find it in unworthy objects. Ὀρθῶς χαίρειν, to enjoy rightly, is one of the surest precepts of human happiness; and it is difficult for a layman to put his finger on any denunciation of pleasure, as such, in either Old or New Testament. There is something of insincerity, something unmanly, in the conventional attitude assumed towards pleasure by professing Christians. We are constantly seeking it, yet we declare abhorrence of pleasure-seekers; we profess to despise it, yet the whole effort of the nations is to obtain it. Montaigne, distinguished for frankness rather than sternness of philosophy, makes no bones about this: "Toutes les opinions du monde en sont là, que le plaisir est notre but; quoyqu'elles en prennent divers moyens: aultrement on les chasseroit d'arrivée; car qui escouteroit celuy qui, pour sa fin, establiroit nostre peine et mesaise?"

This contradiction of profession and practice arises in part from sheer hypocrisy, in part from imper-

fectly understanding the true nature of pleasure, or, as it may please some to put it (though the phrase so arranged is neither so comprehensive nor so explicit), the nature of true pleasure. Christians, it is true, are told to rejoice when men shall speak evil of them and persecute them, and this seems sometimes to be interpreted as an injunction to make themselves so ungenial and disagreeable as to bring upon themselves the natural consequences of being disliked; but it is certain there is nothing good or to be grateful for in evil-speaking and persecution, and no merit in enduring or courting such treatment, except so far as it is a sign that those who incur it are taking a course opposed to the will and practice of worldly men. But even such martyrs are not called on to resign all idea of pleasure for evermore; the enjoyment is but postponed, "for great is their reward in heaven." Throughout Scripture pleasure is pronounced a good and right thing, and therefore to be desired. "I know that there is no good in them," says the Preacher, "but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life. And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God."

However thorough our persuasion may be that ours is no continuing city, and that we are on the way to a better world, there is no merit in making our journey thither uncomfortable. What is the aim of all philanthropy but pleasure in the present? what is the promise of every religion but pleasure in the future?

With what consistency can the honest believer undervalue pleasure, when the Psalmist declares that at the Lord's "right hand are pleasures for evermore"? Even Jeremiah, the eponymus of all that is doleful, is constrained to offer pleasure as the reward of righteousness: "Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, both young men and old together;" yet there lingers among certain sects a feeling, expressed in Petrarch's description of the dance, as quoted by Burton, as "a circle of which the devil himself is the centre; many women that use it have come dishonest home; most indifferent; none better." Burton himself, after citing the most furious denunciations of it as well as what has been written in its praise, was led to the following conclusion: "This is my censure in brief; dancing is a pleasant recreation of body and mind, if sober and modest (such as our Christian dances are), if tempestively used."

It is delicious to picture the prolix and erudite Anatomist of Melancholy being lured out of his den in Christ Church to join "tempestively" in the dance: perhaps it was this that led the "ancients of Christ Church" to assure Anthony a-Wood "that his company was very merry, facete, and juvenile."

If we may start with the assumption that pleasure is a good and right thing, one to be desired, and therefore one that it is worth taking some trouble to secure, then it will not be wasting time to consider its true nature and remark upon some of the more

frequent and remediable hindrances to its attainment, as well as to point out the common neglect of some of its purest sources.

Pleasure, then, not in the limited, painfully technical sense in which Sainte-Beuve used the word, but in the full meaning of enjoyment and delight, is indeed one of the most difficult subjects that can possibly be submitted to analysis. Seek and ye shall *not* find it, unless your search is wisely directed. Often it eludes the most elaborate plans and costly preparation for its capture. Equally often it springs out unawares upon the wayfarer when he is least looking for it, meets him with frankest countenance where its presence would be least suspected. Thus the ordinary scheme of social entertainment is devised to encourage that most precious of all earthly joys—human intercourse. The stranger wandering through London on some night in June finds himself in a street crowded with glittering carriages, a constant stream of airily dressed, bejewelled, and beflowered men and women flows across the carpeted steps of a spacious mansion; strains of exquisite music float through open windows into the summer night; glimpses may be had of staircases and shaded balconies bright with all the flowers of fairy-land. To the poor wanderer it seems impossible to imagine enjoyment more complete than that prepared for those privileged to meet their friends in such a lovely scene; and turning away with an envious sigh, he betakes himself to his lonely lodging to dream of

delights that are far beyond his reach. Beyond *his* reach only, does he think? He little knows! Conversation has been described—neither inaptly nor irreverently—as the communion of saints, but, in some of its phases, it is pretty well disguised.

"Going to Lady Midas's to-night?" inquires a weary-looking woman of one whom she meets dining at a friend's house, who, elderly and overfed, finds it a task almost beyond her powers to keep awake till the men come up from the dining-room.

"Yes," replies the second, ineffectually smothering a yawn; "we must just show ourselves there, I suppose. But it's a bore; for there are two or three balls to-night, and it is such a bad house to get away from."

Or perhaps it is among the men that the popular aspect of Lady Midas's magnificent entertainment reveals itself.

"Not going yet, old fellow," says the host, "not going into society, eh? You surely know better than that at your age. Look here," sinking his voice, "just you wait till the women have gone, and we'll have a quiet rubber and a cigar."

"Ah, wouldn't I just like it!" replies the other, ruefully; "but you see my wife insists on my going to a confounded squash at Lady Midas's—won't go without me, you know."

Yet the hostess's object is as laudable as the pains she takes are elaborate. She throws open her house,

fills it with flowers, music, and soft light, provides a supper fit for Lucullus—all to enable people to meet their friends. Why is it all a failure (though every one agrees it was a great success)? why are nineteen out of every twenty people bored at having to go, and why are they in such a hurry to come away? The thing aimed at—pleasant intercourse—is far from unattainable; for *that* may turn up suddenly, without the slightest preparation, in a chance meeting on a railway journey, or (this has actually happened) in a dentist's waiting-room. The fact is, elaborate preparations are more likely to scare than to secure pleasure. To quote some expressive words of Mr Dallas: "Pleasure seldom gives note of her coming. She comes like an angel — unheard, unseen, unknown; and not till she is gone or parting from us are our eyes opened to what we have enjoyed."

The nature of the object sought after is not in itself of the essence of pleasure. There is, perhaps, no engine of ease more consummately designed for its purpose than a modern bed, with its liberal expanse of resilient mattress and alternate layers of snowy flax and creamy wool, by which temperature and weight of covering may be adjusted with the last degree of nicety. As a machine for repose it really leaves nothing to be desired; yet how completely, after all, does the enjoyment of it depend on circumstances beyond the occupant's control. There is

no half-hour of physical enjoyment so unalloyed as that before getting up in the morning. The limbs revel in the delicate contact of fine linen and the amorous pressure of the mattress. Is one too warm? —there are unexplored recesses under the sheets stored with refreshing coolness, into which feet and arms may be thrust. Is one chilly?—there is the eider-down quilt, light as a lover's whisper and warm as his nymph's embrace, to draw over the top. Nor is it merely an hour of sensuous ease. There is none in the whole round of the clock when the intellect is so active, or when thought flows so quick and so clear. A considerate host remembers this, and makes bedside book-shelves as integral a part of bedroom furniture as a wash-hand-stand or a wardrobe. Yet, to the bedridden, what is this bed but Gehenna? The same sheets, the same springs, the same decorous luxury is there, but they confer no pleasure; the sick man loathes the very same couch which, when healthy, he was often too laggard in leaving; and when visitors come, bringing with them the smell of the field and the wood, his whole being creaks with longing to be out in the free air, to feel the glorious sun or to cower in the bitter blast.

Again: to the student—the genuine *helluo librorum* —books are all in all; give him a generous supply of these and he is satisfied, he wants no more; he even grudges the time spent in taking food, rest, or necessary exercise; in extreme cases he becomes indifferent

to living friendship, finding all his solace in the companionship described by Mr Ruskin in one of the soundest of his many sound scoldings:—

"There is a society continually open to us, of people who will talk to us as long as we like, whatever our rank or occupation: talk to us in the best words they can choose, and with thanks if we listen to them. And this society, because it is so numerous and so gentle,—and can be kept waiting round us all day long, not to grant audience, but to gain it;—kings and statesmen lingering patiently in those plainly furnished and narrow ante-rooms, our bookcase shelves,—we make no account of that company,—perhaps never listen to a word they would say all day long."

Long before Ruskin, Richard of Bury, when as yet printed books were not, spoke not less reverently of literature. "These are masters," he wrote in his 'Philobiblon' (A.D. 1340), "who instruct us without chastisement, without anger, without fee; if you repair to them, they are not sleeping; if you ask them anything, they do not hide themselves; if you blunder, they complain not; if you betray ignorance, they laugh not."

How can any one remain insensible to books as a source of pleasure?—one at which the million may slake their thirst. Nevertheless, not to mention the schoolboy, in whose eyes books are but elaborate obstacles to the enjoyment of life, there are thousands and tens of thousands of educated men who prefer the scribbling of daily journalists to the written thoughts of kings and statesmen, and seldom read any-

thing but newspapers and shallow magazine articles; or, at the highest, quaff, not from the perennial wells of Helicon, but from the wayside rills of contemporary fiction. They indulge in what Mr Braithwaite has spoken of as "a feeble attempt to think by proxy." But this kind do not know the pleasure of literature, because desire, in the gratification of which consists the nature of pleasure, has not been born in them; "many are the thyrsus-bearers, but few are the mystics." There are plenty who take books in their hands, but few who care to commune with the writer, content if he prattles to them pleasantly enough to keep their thoughts in a state of agreeable titillation.

In like manner, persons of a devout temperament have resort to the services of the Church, and find therein comfort for their souls and the brightness of their lives. It is not for a pretence they make long prayers, but because to do so satisfies a want of their nature; while others, not merely the careless or irreverent, but some thoughtful, earnest men, dread the effort involved in the frequency and length of public worship.

Examples might be multiplied, all tending to prove that there is no such thing as objective pleasure, but that pleasure is a harmony—that is, a fitting together —a fitting of an external object with a mood or want within ourselves. It is, to put it plainly, the fulfilment of desire, the gratification of an appetite not necessarily ignoble, but often, in our strangely com-

plex beings, very much the reverse. In short, as Suckling says—

> "'Tis not the meat, but 'tis the appetite
> Makes eating a delight."

The word "harmony," it may be observed, is not used here in a loose or metaphorical sense, but in its literal etymological meaning. Human speech is a spontaneous growth, and words long retain an intrinsic significance which may have been obscured by every-day use. Thus "harmony is best understood by remembering the meaning of the original Greek *ἁρμονία*, a fitting together of parts. Being a convenient expression for the pleasing arrangement of musical notes, the term has been almost monopolised by musicians; but so far from there being any affectation in applying it generally, it would be the most mischievous form of pedantry to restrict it to technical use. The word suggests a true analogy between the agreement of musical sounds and that fulfilment of desire which creates or constitutes pleasure; and the art of pleasure is, in fact, neither more nor less than the science of harmony.

For reasons already referred to, of special weight in a country which retains the stamp of the Puritan furnace, it is difficult to get the popular mind to analyse the nature and ingredients of pleasure, without importing moral considerations into the process; but even these may be more closely examined hereafter, if a clear understanding may be had of the former.

In the ancient Greek philosophy two distinct theories of pleasure claimed disciples: the earlier Cyrenaic school taught that pleasure was to be had only in action, securing a process of change from an indifferent state to a better one, thereby leading to a reliance on the senses to produce material delight; the Epicurean doctrine (strangely misapprehended by modern people) being that pleasure is the result only of repose, that tranquillity of body and mind should be the end in view, and that the intellect is the true channel of enjoyment. Plato, one of the earliest and most courageous chemists of pleasure, endorsed the views of the Cyrenaics, and explained that pleasure could only be defined as a relief from pain. This was also the opinion of Kant, who held that what we strive to attain is not so much a definite gratification as the appeasing of disquiet :—

"And that it is not a pleasure which entices us to this (the passing from one state to another), but a kind of discontent with present suffering, is shown by the fact that we are always seeking for some object of pleasure without knowing what that object is, merely as an aid against the disquiet—against the complement of petty pains which for the moment irritate us and annoy us. It is thus apparent that man is urged on by a necessity of his nature to go out of the present as a state of pain, in order to find in the future one less irksome. . . . Pleasure is nothing positive; it is only a liberation of pain, and therefore only something negative."

This is the sort of quagmire in which ingenious philosophers delight in landing us. We know—every

natural healthy mind that does not torment itself with phrases knows—that positive pleasure *does* exist; and though we may be unable to define it in a thoroughly scholarly way, and may be uncertain whether it should be classed as a thing or a state, we are as well able to recognise it as the source of joy when we meet with it, as we are to recognise pain as the source of sorrow. Physicists tell us, with perfect truth, that a rainbow has no actual existence, that it is merely a sensation produced in the optic nerve by the decomposition of light under refraction; nevertheless all but the colour-blind know a rainbow when they see it, and, regarded purely as a phenomenon, it is capable of being examined and explained. We respond readily enough to the *Sursum corda!* of pleasure, though it may be difficult to explain the nature of the summons to our own satisfaction or that of others; but it seems easy to show, by a concrete instance, the delusion of holding pleasure to be nothing but an escape from pain. Jeremiah's approval of dancing as an expression of mirth has already been quoted. Suppose a young girl, undressing to go to bed, were to receive an unexpected message inviting her to a ball; would she hesitate, think you, between her pillow and her ball-dress? Here is no case of escaping from pain; she is sleepy, and disposed for rest, as all young things ought to be at night; her desire and instinct is to say her prayers and lay herself down. Kant perhaps would maintain that directly she hears of the ball, she conceives a desire to dance, stronger than the desire for

rest, and she hastens to the ball to assuage the unease or pain of desire. The philosopher may be right; but to plain folks, unversed in metaphysics, it would seem that for this girl pleasure begins the moment she hears of the ball, and, let it be hoped, continues as long as she stays at it. She was perfectly content and at ease when she received the summons, perhaps was meditating on the pleasure of getting into a comfortable bed, so that, according to Kant, it was impossible for her to derive pleasure from the ball, for she was conscious of no pain before going to it, and, says he, "it is the sudden, the instantaneous removal of the pain which determines all that we can call a veritable pleasure."

According to this doctrine, pleasure only arises from abrupt contrast, and while discussing this matter, Mr Dallas, in the dainty bundle of essays which he labelled by the fanciful title of 'The Gay Science,'[1] very aptly quoted one of Browning's characters in support of it:—

> "'Heigho!' yawned one day King Francis,
> 'Distance all value enhances!
> When a man's busy, why, leisure
> Strikes him as wonderful pleasure.
> Faith! and at leisure once is he,
> Straightway he longs to be busy.
> Here we've got peace, and aghast I'm
> Caught thinking war the true pastime.'"

But Plato himself had misgivings on the strict Cyrenaic theory that all pleasure was the result of

[1] Two vols. London: Chapman & Hall. 1866.

escaping from a condition of little ease into one of greater. In one of his dialogues he puts into the mouth of Socrates a clear definition of absolute as distinguished from relative pleasure. It is true that he admits a very limited number to the list of absolute pleasures—viz., "Those from beautiful colours, as they are called, and from figures,[1] and most of those from odours, and those from sounds, and any object whose absence is unfelt and painless, while their presence is sensible and productive of pleasure. . . . To these may be added the pleasures of knowledge, if you grant that no hunger or pangs of hunger precede their acquisition."

What, then, is the true definition of this pleasure, of which an attempt has been made to delineate some of the traits? by what means is its coming to be ensured? by what features is it to be recognised, and by what craft can its flight be delayed? Alas! it all comes to this, that Pleasure like Beauty eludes definition. "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?" "I cannot help laughing," said Goethe, "at the æsthetical folks who torment themselves in endeavouring by some abstract words to reduce to a conception that inexpressible thing to which we give the name of beauty. Beauty is a primæval phenomenon which itself never makes its

[1] In a subsequent and remarkable passage he makes an important limitation to this: "By beautiful figures I do not mean what the mass of men might imagine, animal shapes or painted forms: but straight and curved lines, says my theory, and the planes and solids they generate with turning-lathes, and rulers, and goniometers."

appearance, but the reflection of which is within a thousand different utterances of the creative mind, and is as various as nature itself."

So is pleasure — "a primæval phenomenon" — a radiance shed from the presence of Him at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore, the source of which, though we may speculate about it, we cannot yet know. This much, however, it is in our power to do; seeing that pleasure is a sensation arising from the fitting of fulfilment to desire, and of condition to mood, we can encourage those desires and train those moods which conduct to the purest gratification; the furniture of "the soul's dark cabin, battered and decayed," may be so arranged that nothing shall intercept the bright rays that fall on the casement: it is even permitted to make new apertures or widen existing ones, each an avenue of fuller delight, a trap to catch the sunbeams of joy.

For example, the immense expansion and inexorable precision of modern science, though they deter most people from taking an active interest in it, have, notwithstanding, immensely increased the richness of natural science as a source of pleasure. One is not necessarily a drone because he revels in the store accumulated by the industry of others. It is quite true that the farm of science is divided into a thousand fields, and it is only by diligent labour in one of these —often in no more than a compartment of one of these —that substantial addition to the harvest of knowledge can be made. It was otherwise in the days when

Bacon wrought; the scope of science was then so little developed that a diligent student might excel in and contribute to almost every branch of it, but now the labour has to be divided among specialists. Oliver Wendell Holmes's entomologist is no caricature; his department of insect life was the *Coleoptera* or beetles, and he indignantly resented some question addressed to him about a butterfly, as if he were one who should concern himself about those meretricious *Lepidoptera*. It is a condition of things bringing to mind the Italian prescription for a salad sauce, which requires four men to concoct—namely, a spendthrift for the oil, a miser for the vinegar, a councillor for the salt, and a madman to stir it.

But the harvest is garnered not for the labourers alone, but for all; "whoso is simple, let him turn in hither." It is possible for every one with ordinary leisure to acquire considerable knowledge of the results of many branches of science. "The world," observed Seneca, "would be a small thing if it did not contain matter of inquiry for all the world;" and who can number the new sources of pleasure opened up by merely becoming acquainted with the province of scientific research? "Jack of all trades, master of none," may be objected; but here is no question of being a master—the work has all been done, the feast prepared for us by others. One who has instructed himself in the classification and distribution of plants is not thereby entitled to rank himself as a botanist; but henceforth—let the hillside where

he wanders be never so desolate, the way he fares along never so dreary, they will have for him a brightness and a significance beyond the understanding of one who sees there nothing but "weeds." So in the kindred sciences, geology and zoology, there exists not a habitable spot on the globe where a mind equipped with simple instruction in these will not derive far deeper delight than that so keenly sought for in the destruction of fur and feather. Sir John Lubbock, by lending his countenance to that device of the enemy — the "Hundred Best Books" — has raised serious misgivings as to his merit as a guide to sound enjoyment; but no one is better qualified than he to speak to the value of science as a source of pleasure. Those who know the diligence with which, in the intervals of leisure in a life of unusual activity and versatility, he has applied himself to strenuous and fruitful study, will best appreciate the reason he has for devoting a chapter to "Science" in his 'Pleasures of Life." "Those," he says, "who have not tried for themselves, can hardly imagine how much science adds to the interest and variety of life. It is altogether a mistake to regard it as dry, difficult, or prosaic—much of it is as easy as it is interesting. . . . *The real causes of natural phenomena are far more striking, and contain more real poetry, than those which have occurred to the untrained imagination of mankind.*"

The voice of Nature speaks to all who will hear: it is not a serious task to learn her speech, for the task itself is a pleasure. Almost every one is so sit-

uated as to make it a matter of choice whether it shall fall on his ears as the unmeaning clatter of a foreign tongue, or shall be close communion so long as life endures. There is an exquisite fairy tale about a lad who received the marvellous gift of understanding the speech of every living creature, from the ant to the elephant; not less marvellous is the interpretation within reach of almost every one. Upon the whole of creation, animate and inanimate, is written the legend, "Whoso hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Proof of the enduring quality of pleasure derived from knowledge of physical science may be had in the fact that no one is ever known to tire of it. No one has ever seen a man once instructed in botany become indifferent to trees and flowers; he who has acquired a knowledge of zoology will, sometimes unconsciously, note every bird that flies out of the hedge; and let anybody once become acquainted with the character and succession of geological strata, any ordinary railway cutting will henceforth be to him as a page in a fascinating book. It is the noble old myth of Memnon's statue, which alone, of all those the morning rays smote upon, gave forth responsive music. In the Platonic dialogue already quoted, Socrates is made to affirm that "intellectual pleasures may be assumed to be unmixed with pain, and the lot, not of the many, but of extremely few," because the intellectual hunger which spurs one to pursue them is in itself a pleasant sensation, a safeguard against *ennui*—that cancer which eats into so

much good leisure. But, in order to satisfy this painless hunger, men are content to undergo privation and encounter much suffering. The chronicles of travel are crowded with evidence of this, though the great travellers, from Christopher Columbus to Dr Nansen, the recent explorer of Greenland, are not exactly cases in point, the suffering they endured having been met with, not in recreation, but in the discharge of their chosen profession. A better illustration may be found nearer home, in Robert Dick, the baker of Thurso, one of the latest martyrs of science. Who can read unmoved the pathetic narrative of this lonely but ardent life? who can follow him without admiration when, after a night spent in preparing the daily tale of loaves, he left his house at four in the morning to walk twenty or even thirty miles across the bleak pathless hills to dig a *Holoptychius* out of a cliff of Old Red Sandstone, or gather a *Sonchus* from the shoulder of Morven, returning at night dead beat, but supremely happy? Happy, that is, in all but this, that of all his fellow-townsmen and women there was not one from whom he could expect the slightest sympathy; for most of them regarded him as eccentric, and all wished he would pay more attention to the quality of his bread. Now, the question which each of us must settle for himself is, whether these high pleasures were too dearly bought. Is it worth incurring the sharper pain in order to share the higher delight? Is the intellectual enthusiast wiser than the debauchee who professes to be satisfied

with an ounce of pleasure to a pound of pain? Or is there greater wisdom in the mood that sighs—

> "Happy the man whose wish and care
> A few paternal acres bound,
> Content to breathe his native air
> In his own ground"?

Many may be ready to declare that Robert Dick had been on the whole a happier man if he had been a more careful baker, and so kept out of financial embarrassment. But who can doubt, were it given to him to live his life again, what his own choice would have been? For what balance at the bank would he have foregone that "one crowded hour of glorious life" when he discovered *Hierochloë borealis*, thereby adding a new plant to the British flora? For how many score of opulent customers would he have exchanged the single visit of Sir Roderick Murchison, and missed the ecstasy, after five-and-twenty years of solitary toil, of showing his rich store of fossils to the great geologist? Assuredly he would hug his hardships again to his bosom, so might he have the same reward. The true lover counts not as suffering the sacrifice made for his beloved.

But the point on which it is desired to lay stress is this, that all this fund of exquisite pleasure might be drawn on by multitudes without paying the heavy price exacted from Robert Dick. There are thousands of well-to-do folk who might share his pursuits without sacrificing comfort and risking solvency as he had to do; thousands to whom locomotion is easy, and

leisure ample, whereas Dick wore out his frame by extraordinary physical exertion, and stole the necessary time for study from the hours available for repose.

The testimony of all who have tried it is unanimous that intellectual pleasures transcend every other kind of pleasure within our reach; yet it remains as true in this day as it was in the days of Plato, that "they are the lot, not of the many, but of extremely few." The faculty of knowledge is latent in every sound mind: it has been shown that pleasure is the common aim of all human society; how passing strange it is that so few think of developing this, the source of the highest and most enduring pleasure.

Midway between the province of science and the province of art, blending its confines into those of each, and partaking of their properties, stands literature. It is dangerous to speculate on the pleasure attendant upon authorship: let it be assumed that it is not wanting, or there would not be so many quills dipped in inkhorns, and there let the matter rest, lest by dwelling on it encouragement should be given to latent ambition; *scribimus indocti doctique;* in all conscience, there are as many scribblers as this much-enduring world can suffer. As to the readers, reference has been made already to their general neglect of works of the higher class—let the returns of every free and circulating library in the

realm be cited if confirmation is wanted. One cannot but believe that if it were only known what stores of delight are ready to pour forth from library shelves for any one who once gets hold of the right key, the dust would not be suffered to gather on these treasures. It is impossible to contemplate the indifference shown to literature by many amiable, well-conditioned people, without deploring the capacity for enjoyment thus allowed to lie waste. The spectacle of such a source of pleasure neglected brings to the lips the ejaculation of the nameless lord in 'All's Well that Ends Well,' "Is it possible he should know that he is, and be that he is?"

Well, it may be said, it's all very well to tell one to read; but how the deuce is one to know where to begin in such a congestion of literature? There are 20,000 volumes published every year; the most diligent "sap" can only get through 7000 or 8000 in a lifetime, so this is a natural and reasonable question, and if one might, without presumption, offer advice—the fruit of vain regret for much misspent time—it would be this: choose some definite subject for the immediate purpose, it does not much matter which, and *read* some of the best—*skim* some of the newest works dealing with it. You will be brought into view of innumerable side vistas, some of them so enticing that you will perhaps be led off the track you intended to follow, so far astray, it may be, that you will never return. There is no harm done: Saul, of a family the least of all the families of the smallest

tribe of Israel, was in search of his father Kish's asses when he met with the prophet who anointed him King of Israel; you may lose sight of the object in pursuit of which you started, but you will find one loftier, or at least you will become so enamoured of the route, that you will never sigh for the insipid pastures of ignorance again. But there must be method even in vagrancy: get into the habit of taking notes as you read. Without this precaution, literature flows over the brain in a current, pleasant and wholesome, indeed, but unfruitful. The mind cannot retain distinct impressions without mechanical aids, and there is no condition of mental atmosphere less satisfactory than haziness. Much of the pleasure of which we are conscious exists in memory: it is plain, therefore, that very much of it must be lost by those who neglect to train, assist, extend, and cultivate the memory. Mr Morritt has described how, when visiting Egglestone and Brignal with Sir Walter Scott, who intended to make these places the scenes of some incidents in "Rokeby," he observed him noting down everything, even to to the kind of wild-flowers growing near. "I laughed, in short, at his scrupulousness; but I understood him when he replied, 'that in Nature herself no two scenes are exactly alike, and that . . . whoever trusted to imagination would soon find his own mind circumscribed and contracted to a few favourite images, and the repetition of these would sooner or later produce that very monotony and barrenness which

had always haunted descriptive poetry in the hands of any but patient worshippers of the truth.'"

Elaborate prescriptions have been given for arrangement of commonplace-books, but they are all in vain: the habit of making notes once acquired, method will shape itself for every one according to what he finds suits his convenience best. Even marginal notes (on one's own books, *bien entendu*) are not to be condemned; not the pert exclamations and marks of approbation or disapproval with which the readers of books from the circulating library deface the page and irritate those that follow them, but notes amplifying or illustrating the author's meaning. An example of this is at hand. There happens to be lying on the table beside me a copy of Mr Hamerton's 'Thoughts about Art.' It is open at page 142, where that suggestive writer compares the prices given for pictures by living artists and those by dead ones. Some one has pencilled in the margin the following note: "Millet, when alive, offered his 'Angelus' to the dealers for 2000 francs (£80), to keep him from starving. He could not get it, and died in great want. In 1889, the same picture was sold for 1,500,000 francs (£60,000), and his mother and sister were in great poverty." Enriched with *marginalia* of this sort, a book acquires the character of a symposium — a constellation of thought, interfering not at all with the radiance of the original planet — and the pleasure of reading it is greatly enhanced.

There are subsidiary sources of pleasure to be found in books besides those in the printed page. The ways of the bibliomaniac may seem ridiculous enough, and the absorption in his pursuit as narrow as that of Wendell Holmes's coleopterist; but it is not necessary to be qualified for a place in John Hill Burton's minute classification as "a black-letter man, or a tall-copyist, or an uncut man, or a rough-edge man, or an early-English dramatist, or an Elzevirian, or a broadsider, or a pasquinader, or an old-brown-calf man, or a Grangerite, or a tawny moroccoite, or a gilt-topper, a marbled-insider, or an *editio princeps* man," in order to derive pleasure from a general knowledge of the styles of printing and binding. He who is either quite indifferent to or ignorant of the way a book is got up, or who despises it as a kind of literary millinery, is shut out from one of the most accessible by-paths of enjoyment. To light by chance in the neglected shelves of a country-house upon the graceful sprays of Nicolas or Clovis Eve, on the delicate tracery of Le Gascon, on the bird of Derome or the fanciful inlaying of Padaloup, is one of those incidents which enrich the hours of leisure and keep *ennui* at bay. There is nothing to prevent as good a speech being delivered in Hyde Park or at a street corner as in the House of Commons or to a great assembly in a large hall; but no one would hesitate as to which would be the better place for it: so one with a cultivated taste to gratify will enjoy the fitness of a good author's dis-

course, conveyed with choice type, good margins, and comely title-page, and enshrined in tasteful and enduring binding. Just as the botanist finds material for observation and pleasant thought in whatever land it may be his lot to linger, so the book-lover will extract pleasure from the second-hand stalls in any country town where he may have to wait for a train. The necessary knowledge is easily acquired, and carries no sorrow with it.

Hardly less pure than the pleasure of knowledge, though partaking more of the sensuous element, is the pleasure derived from art. It is of two kinds—the pleasure of production, which is purely intellectual, and the pleasure of reception, which is partly of the mind and partly of the senses. The artist alone can plumb the depth of the first; to realise the second calls for a degree of training, neither arduous nor necessarily prolonged, but too seldom insisted on. The fine arts reach the mind through two only of the avenues of sense—sight and hearing. Of these two, the eye is at once the more sensitive and the more tolerant, because it is in constant dependence on the intellect. It is a fact not generally appreciated that images of external objects are received upside-down on the retina; a babe's first impression of its father is that his boots tower far above its head; it is experience—*i.e.*, knowledge—that convinces the child of the true relation of everything: images on the retina continue throughout life to be inverted, and it is by a continued though

unconscious play of thought that they are restored to their natural position.

It is this intimate association of the eye with the reflective faculty that makes the appeal by art to the intellect more direct by pictures and images than by sound. For although most of the knowledge that comes by direct instruction arrives at our mind through the ear, the information so conveyed is not received unconsciously, it has to go through a conscious mental process before it is received; whereas eyesight involves incessant unconscious cerebration in the reversion of images as explained above. Many people totally uninstructed in painting derive pleasure from looking at a picture by Titian, who are simply indifferent to or even bored by a sonata by Beethoven.

In pronouncing the eye to be more tolerant of bad art than the ear, perhaps due allowance has not been made for the power it has of protecting itself.

> "Swans sing before they die, 'twere no bad thing
> Did certain persons die before they sing."

The ear has no lids: when a bad performer is singing or playing it is not often possible, consistently with good manners, to shut out the excruciating sound; but when an amateur exhibits his sketches, though they are too likely to be full of wretched drawing and unpleasant colour, the spectator is not obliged to dwell on them, and may even endure the painful sensation caused thereby, in consideration of the interest of incident or topography contained in them.

In art, as in all other things, increased capacity for enjoyment brings with it increased capacity of suffering. Nevertheless the pleasure of good art, when it can be found, is so infinitely enhanced by rightly understanding it, that it is worth while encountering the offence caused by inferior or misapplied work. The untrained eye is insensible to the mischief of base ornament. So great is the development of machinery that the forms of beauty are mimicked and degraded by application to the meanest and most trivial objects. Designs originally conceived for the adornment of a king's diadem or an abbot's psalter appear in caricature on penny match-boxes or soap-boiler's advertisements; the perception that is not keen enough to be offended is deadened by this excessive multiplication of what should be choice and rare. In no department of art has this had a more perceptible effect than in bookbinding. The English fashion of putting everything into cloth binding, tricked out with cheap ornament copied from the designs of good artists, is fatal to the appreciation of genuine work; and the admitted superiority of French binders is partly owing to the practice of publishing in paper covers, after which, if the book is worth binding, it is worth bestowing thought on the fashion of it.

One exception must be made to the remark that increased capacity for enjoyment involves increased capacity for suffering. That is not the case in respect of one pleasure—namely, the pleasure of fine weather.

There is none more thorough or with less alloy; it is unlike other kinds of pleasure in this, that it is independent of anticipation, for, in this climate at least, we never know whether the morrow will be fair or foul, nor is it marred by the apprehension, so hurtful to other enjoyment, of its coming close. We revel in it while it lasts, more thoroughly conscious of it, perhaps, at the moment, than of any other sort of pleasure, and feel inclined to exclaim continually, "What a lovely day!" And the remarkable thing about it is, that he who enjoys fine weather most keenly will derive enjoyment from all kinds of weather; indeed Mr Ruskin says in one of his books that there is no such thing as bad weather, only every kind of delightful weather.

To what general conclusions, then, do these reflections lead us as to the nature of Pleasure and the surest way of securing it? Can we not find an explanation of it more likely to enable us to attain to it than that given by Aristippus, and repeated by Kant, that it is but an escaping from pain? or one more lustrous than that supplied by the Epicureans and the Buddhists, that it is only to be attained in repose, and, ultimately, in the securest repose, annihilation or Nirvâna? or one less cumbrous than Sir William Hamilton's, that "pleasure is a reflex of the spontaneous and unimpeded exertion of a power of whose energy we are conscious"? or one less dubious than Dallas's, who pulls all these to pieces,

and declares that pleasure for the most part is unconscious? We demur to the first, because we know that much pleasure—that derived from beauty, for instance—comes to us with no heraldry of pain; to the second, because, complete repose being unattainable in this world, it would be idle to expect or strive after pleasure; to the third, because it gives no explanation of such pure pleasure as is derived from music or friendship; and to the fourth, because, if the best part of pleasure is unconscious, why should any effort be made to attain to it?

The only intelligible solution is that Pleasure is not a thing, but a sensation caused by the fitting together of desire and accomplishment. There is such a thing as honey, but there is no such thing as sweetness, until contact takes place between the tongue and some object capable of imparting to the gustative *papillæ* that sensation which we call sweetness. For moralists, therefore, to rail against pleasure, is as irrational as it would be for physicians to warn people against sweetness; there are wholesome things that taste sweet as well as unwholesome, there are noble and holy sources of pleasure as well as ignoble and unclean. In pursuing pleasure men are trying to grasp a phantom—in declaiming against it they are beating the air; the important thing is, what is the nature of the desire? for it is of the union of desire and accomplishment that pleasure is born, and the nature of the offspring depends on its parentage. The forbidden objects of desire are contained in six

of the ten commandments; besides these, there are a multitude of objects capable of yielding pleasure, against which there is no law. We have fallen into the habit of speaking antithetically of duty and pleasure, as if they were mutually destructive of one another; but this is equally unjust to both, for of all the collects of the Church there is none wiser than that containing the prayer, "put into our minds good desires."

# PERSONAL NAMES.

THERE is a great deal in a name, all argument, dogma, philosophic theory, or pretty woman's assertion to the contrary notwithstanding. To the last-named source, indeed, few people would be so simple as to go for precise information or logical statement (shall one gather grapes of thorns?), all the less if the young person has betrayed the fallibility of her understanding by falling in love. We may therefore dismiss the pronouncement on this matter by the enamoured Juliet as *obiter dictum*. Romeo and she would never have become, among Western nations at least, the type of all that is passionate and tender, had their sponsors named them Abraham and Sarah; and the imagination recoils from the possibility that Romeo, had he been an Englishman, might, in tender moments, have profaned the name of his lady-love by turning it into Judy. No one knew better than Shakespeare how to wield the spell of nomenclature:

it was delicacy of ear that caused him, when he borrowed the story of the Prince of Denmark from Saxo Grammaticus, to alter the name Hambleth, as it stood in the original, to the more musical Hamlet. Apart from the potent charm of association, there is an appreciable suggestion of moral or physical excellence in the harmonious combination of vocal sounds; while a name, harsh in sound, or having a grotesque appearance when written, discourages expectation of lofty qualities either of mind or body. If it be true that the gift of a bad name involves sinister consequences on a dog's destiny, it is equally true that a good one will sometimes help him over the stile.

As an example of this—by no means extreme—let us compare the various forms of the patronymic signifying "the son of David" — viz., Davidson, Dodson, Dodds (*i.e.*, David's), Davison, and Dawson (from the diminutive Davy and Daw), Dawkins (from the Anglo-Saxon form of diminutive in *kin*), and O'Dowd. The last—the Celtic form—may be dismissed as having a flavour of burlesque about it, suggestive of Donnybrook fair. Of the others, with the exception of the third, it may be said that there is nothing specially attractive or romantic about them: they have a neutral, workaday sound, and postulate no extraordinary effort either to live up to or to live down. Any one of them might be borne with equal congruity by a Prime Minister, a Poet-Laureate, or a hero of melodrama. But can it be

argued that a lad starting in life under the name of Dodds is not somewhat heavily handicapped?

Or, applying the money test — the fame of the accomplished Paderewski has for months attracted thousands to his recitals: it is unjust to the musical sense of the British public to doubt whether as many would have been drawn had the foreigner's name appeared on the hoardings in homely English— Paterson? Here, however, association counts for a good deal: we are accustomed to expect better music from foreigners than from among ourselves, and the prophet Paterson might in his own country receive less than his meed.

Association does prevail sometimes to hallow, endear, or dignify the most awkward arrangement of vowels and consonants. The names conferred by sailors upon their battle-ships, like those chosen by Red Indians for their braves, usually convey an idea of awe, grandeur, swiftness, or beauty; but there was something comically incongruous in the despatches which reached this country of the doughty performances of the Chilian ironclad, the O'Higgins, in the late war. Speculation is baffled in attempting to read the significance underlying that patronymic; for, even as pronounced by a foreigner, with the true value of the vowel *i*—O'Heeggeens—it is impossible, without knowing the history attached, to receive the impression of terror or admiration.

Unquestionably we are careless—culpably careless —in the bestowal of names, and indifferent to the

forms they are suffered to assume. In a philosophic essay, written in 1751, entitled a 'Letter on the Deaf and Dumb for the use of those who can hear and see,' Diderot indulged in what he calls metaphysical anatomy, and, analysing the senses of man, decided that of all of them the ear is the proudest. In our own country this must be the intense pride which apes humility; for, hitherto, we have made no conscious effort to retain noble forms of names, but have, on the contrary, allowed many of high descent to creep into sordid shapes. It had surely been worth an effort to save the Saxon Godbert being degraded into service as the surname Gotobed, or the Norman Joscelin or Guesclin into Gosling. The latter of these has hardly fared better in Ireland, for there, having first become MacGostelin, it has since been tricked out in the exotic guise of Costello. John of Sevenoaks was mercifully spared the humiliation of foreseeing that his descendants would come to be known as Snooks. It is only a people sadly indifferent to beauty of sound, who, having refused to accept Lizavir and Isabeau from the Normans, admitted Isabel only to show their preference for a fourth and uncouth form of the same name—viz., Elizabeth. We might be well enough off with Isabel, though, as a matter of fact, it is a name formed on a false supposition that Isabeau was masculine, whereas it was always a woman's name. And, having the pretty Alice well established here, would it not be well to put an end to the ungainly Eliza, which Mr Fer-

guson has shown to be its equivalent (not, as is commonly supposed, a shortened form of Elizabeth),[1] and, if variety be desired, have recourse to the old diminutive, Alison?

Arnold, as a baptismal name, is seldom used now, nor is it likely to be dissociated from disciplinary memories connected with Latin exercises till it is restored to its old form, Ernauld. As for Joan, that soft appellative is too seldom heard among us, though the shrill Jane only came in with Henry VIII.'s reign; but we are occasionally called on to tolerate the barbarous Joanna.

Surely, of all people that on earth do dwell, there is none that should cultivate such fastidious care in the bestowal of names as the English, who have crushed the music out of so many of them by an excruciating insular pronunciation of vowels. The peculiarities of our climate, our food, or some other unknown conditions affecting the structure of the mouth and larynx, have caused us to warp the long vowels *á, é, í, ó, ú* (pronounced in the original Mercian, and probably in literary Middle-English, to correspond with the vowel-sounds in our *pass, pane, preen, prone, prune*) into a private gibberish, in which they sound as in *pace, peace, priee, port, pew*. One of the least evils consequent on this perversity is that Englishmen are debarred from conversing with foreigners in Latin, the speech of science and art common to all nations.

[1] Surnames as a Science. By Robert Ferguson, M.P. London: 1884.

The symbol *i* we choose to regard as signifying the diphthong *ai* (ah, ee); the result being a cruel mincing and distortion of that name which Christian nations hold highest in esteem — the name of the Mother of God. How can one endure the Britannic 'Maria' when he knows the liquid beauty of the Italian? How is it that genteel people persist in talking of 'Mary,' when they have only to travel as far as Cumberland to hear the name pronounced in the sweet intonation of old Northern English, nearly like the French Marie? The old diminutive of Marion retains more of the true sound, and it is a pity that it is fallen so much out of fashion. Spoken by a Welshman, our language sounds strangely musical to ears accustomed to the coarse intonation in London streets, or wearied by the lazy drawl of drawing-room English, because the Welshman gives the vowels their full value, which his native speech retains. It were hard to forgive our forefathers for losing the broad Middle-English accent, if for no other reason than that the change has killed one of the sweetest names of women. Diana, as we pronounce it, is positively ugly, but on the lips of an Italian it is a poem in itself. Other and less remediable causes have deprived us of two mellifluous feminine names — Delilah and Sapphira; for until some adventurous writer successfully whitewashes the historical characters who bore them, these must remain in the 'Index Expurgatorius.'

In early days, before the world was so full or so busy as it is now, babes were named with great sig-

nificance. Thus Eve called her third son Seth—*i.e.*, who putteth; "for God, she said, had appointed her another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." Hannah chose the name Samuel—*i.e.*, heard or asked of God; and when Phinehas's wife heard of Eli's death, ere she died in childbirth, she named her son Ichabod, Where is the glory? The Old Testament teems with instances of such a natural practice, which survived almost into historic times in this country, though many of the names bestowed by Saxon parents on their offspring can have expressed no more than affectionate aspiration for their welfare or for the development of character. Such, at least, must have been the motive in the numerous baptismal names beginning with *ead*, happiness, as Edward, Edgar, Edmond, Edwin, Edith. More intelligent is the rule observed by the Dacota Indians, who have two fixed lists of names for boys and girls respectively, applied to each in order of birth:—

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Eldest son, | *Chaske.* | Eldest daughter, | *Wenonah.* |
| Second " | *Haparm.* | Second " | *Harpen.* |
| Third " | *Ha-pe-dah.* | Third " | *Harpstenah.* |
| Fourth " | *Chatun.* | Fourth " | *Waska.* |
| Fifth " | *Harka.* | Fifth " | *We-harka.* |

These childish appellatives serve well enough to distinguish them, till circumstance or the development of character suggests some other name which sticks to the youth for life.[1]

[1] Primitive Culture. By Edward B. Tylor. Third edition. Two vols. London: 1891.

There are still some parents among us who ticket their hapless brood with opportunist or occasional names. It will be in the twentieth century before a number of young persons of both sexes will find themselves approaching maturity indelibly stamped with the barbarous name Jubilee, in commemoration of the year 1887. It is not often that irritation finds such temperate expression as that found by the sorely tried father, who had his twins christened Cherubim and Seraphim, because "they ceased not day nor night crying."

There was, indeed, an era in our history when British insensibility to the poetry of sound permitted the Puritans to indulge with grotesque effect in allusive baptismal names. The height of the Puritan's devotion had its counterpart in the depth of his fanaticism, unchecked by the slightest sense of humour or moderation. English people in the seventeenth century not only called their children after the moral virtues, but even chose for them names, and sentences from Scripture to serve as names, implying abject degradation and abasement of the creature. It is nauseous to read of innocent children receiving at the font the tarnished names of Cain, Tamar, Korah, Abiram, Ananias, Sapphira, and even Milcom, "the abomination of the children of Ammon." Camden alludes to some of these names—Earth, Dust, Ashes, Tribulation, The-Lord-is-near, More-trial, &c., as having "been given by some to their children, with no evil meaning, but upon some singular and precise conceit." Now surely

it might have been possible to reconcile some respect for pleasant sound with pious fervour. The Puritan names Patience, Mercy, Faith, are framed on similar lines and with almost as sweet effect as Lætitia, Serena, and Victoria among the Romans, or Glycere, Euphemia, and Theodosia among the Greeks, and we should be loath to give up Christian and Grace. But the thoroughgoing fanatic is not satisfied till he has got rid of every shred of romance. It is no part of his mission to suggest righteousness, much less impute it; if there is a sore, he is not happy till he gets his finger on it; and those sponsors must have felt they were bearing noble witness to Christian charity who were answerable for the following entry in the baptismal register of Waldron:—

"Flie-fornication, the bace sonne of Catren Andrewes, bapt. y^e^ 17th Desemb., 1609."

Poor Katrine Andrewes! how those good men must have made your cheeks tingle, having in this respect such an advantage over their Master, that they were not touched even by a feeling for your infirmity.

A more charitable spirit moved the sponsors of another unwelcome little stranger, who is recorded in the Register of Kingsdown, in Kent, in 1581, as "Inocent Day, the base borne sone of one Day."

A tearful little tragedy is quoted by Mr Bardsley from the Register of St Helen, Bishopsgate. The record runs:—

"*September* 1, 1611.—Job-rakt-out-of-the-asshes, being

borne the last of August in the lane going to Sir John Spencer's back-gate, and there laide in a heape of seacole asshes, was baptized the ffirst day of September following, and dyed the next day after."

Happily, we have purged ourselves from this unlovely practice so far, that the only results traceable at this day are the frequency of Scriptural names in our registers, and the survival of some of the virtues as women's names. Mr Dudgeon answers for knowing two ladies called Mehetabel, a name preserved in their family from Puritan times, and contracted familiarly into Belle.[1] Among Scriptural names Sarah was at one time a great favourite, though now it is happily fallen out of vogue. John Dunton, the bookseller, who died in 1735, aged 76, leaving behind him a curious autobiography called the 'Life and Errors of John Dunton,' had a unique experience with ladies of that name. He describes his first love-affair with Susannah Parkhurst; but that came to nought. So did the next, with the beautiful Sarah Seaton, who "gave him a mortal wound." He recovered, however, and was presently in love with three ladies simultaneously, Sarah Day, Sarah Doolittle, and Sarah Briscoe. Before he could make up his mind he changed it, proposed to and was accepted by Miss Annesley, whose real name does not transpire, for he paraphrases it as the "lovely Iris." After some years of married life, Iris died, and within six months

[1] A Short Introduction to the Origin of Surnames. By Patrick Dudgeon. Edinburgh: 1890.

Dunton took to himself a second wife, Sarah Nicholas.

One old English name, and one only, came out of the fires of the Reformation chastened and more beautiful than before—that is, the feminine Custance, mentioned by Chaucer in the 'Man of Lawes Tale,' which now appears as Constance.

Except from Scriptural association few foreign names have found their way into our lists, or, having done so, have not remained long. In the American civil war some volunteer regiments were raised in Kansas for the Northern army, and certain officers appear in the Army Register of 1862-65 as Captains Tuc-ka-bat-che-ha-jo, No-ko-so-lo-che, Tus-te-nup-chup-ko, Ak-ti-yah-gi-ya-ho-lah, and Lieutenants Ko-ne-pe-a-ho-la, Tats-ca-ha-jo, Pa-ho-se-mah-lah, Tus-te-nuk-ko-chee, and many others. But some of these gallant fellows had adapted themselves to civilisation by translating their native names into English, and one may read of Captain Stand-whirlwind and Lieutenant Tenni-walkingstick. There was a boy at Rugby school in 1875 called Alatan Tam Chiboulac Atkinson, who, having been born in Armenia, was named after some of the mountains there.

A writer in 'Notes and Queries' (12th December 1891), states that in 1874 the following was registered in the parish of St Faith's, Norwich:—

"Dods Eliza Delilah, daughter of Arphad Ambrose Alexander Habbakuk William Shelah and Virtue Leah Woodcock."

This is enough to make one regret that a clause prohibiting such barbarism had not been inserted in the Act recently passed for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

Almost as grotesque as the passion for humiliating names is that for romantic and high-sounding appellatives. An example of this may be found in the 'Times' law report for February 1, 1890, wherein it is recorded that one Charles Groom had, by deed poll, duly enrolled, assumed the name of "Charles de Bourbon d'Este Palæologus Gonzaga." Surely a more convenient and descriptive one might have been found in the Old Testament—Nabal, "folly is with thee."

Mr Bardsley, in his excellent work on English nomenclature,[1] gives some interesting statistics showing the various degrees of popular favour accorded at different times to different names, and is able, in some instances, to trace the causes for the change. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to estimate the relative frequency of names prior to the Norman Conquest, which created something like a revolution in that respect. William, of course, got a good start, as is shown[2] in 'Domesday Book,' where stand

68 Williams, 48 Roberts, 28 Walters, 10 Johns.

In 1173 Sir William St John and Sir William Fitz-Hamon entertained a dinner-party at the Court of Henry II. The invitations were limited to knights

[1] English Surnames, their Sources and Significance. By C. W. Bardsley. Second edition. London: 1875.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 42.

of the name of William, and the company numbered 120. But the day of John was not long to tarry, and in 1347 the Common Council of London contained

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 35 Johns, | 15 Thomas's, | 8 Roberts; |
| 17 Williams, | 10 Richards, | |

and in 1385, out of 376 names enrolled in the Guild of St George at Norwich, there were

128 Johns, 47 Williams, 41 Thomas's.

From that day to this John and William have held their ground as the commonest baptismal names in England.

Allusion has been made to the disfavour into which some names have fallen, and Mr Bardsley[1] mentions the beautiful name Isabel or (less musically) Isabella as an instance. He attributes its unpopularity with the lower and middle orders to their hatred of John Lackland, whose consort was Isabella of Angoulême; but it may be surmised that it was some other influence which prevailed to bring it into or keep it in disfavour, for surely popular feeling would have shown itself chiefly against the name of John himself. This, as has been shown, was not the case; but whatever was the reason, Isabel, though common among the aristocracy, never became a favourite with the English people till Edward IV.'s marriage reconciled them to it under the form of Elizabeth, a name which received an amazing impulse in the following century under good Queen Bess.

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 79.

Nowadays, for the most part, people show preference for family names. William succeeds William, and John, John, in monotonous succession; or, at most, alternate generations repeat the same Christian name. The former custom would have been impracticable in days before surnames became fixed; indeed, that the device of alternation did not help matters much is shown by a dispensation issued from Rome in 1402, in favour of "Richard Johnson, son of John Richardson." An earlier and more illustrious example is that of Alanus *dapifer*, the progenitor of the royal House of Stewart, whose son was styled Walter FitzAlan, and Walter's son became Alan FitzWalter; and the same method of distinction was adopted by the Hamilton line, in which are recorded Walter FitzGilbert and Gilbert FitzWalter.

It is not often thought necessary to consult the infant in the selection of his name, nevertheless Mr Tylor quotes this practice as prevailing among two nations at opposite sides of the earth.

"The New Zealand priest would repeat to the infant a long list of names of its ancestors, fixing upon that name which the child, by sneezing or crying when it was uttered, was considered to select for itself; while the Cheremiss in Russia would shake the baby till it cried, and then repeat names to it till it chose itself one by leaving off crying." [1]

Parents of halting imagination in this country have

[1] Primitive Culture, vol. ii. p. 4.

recourse to the names of distinguished persons: those of monarchs, generals, and noblemen are public property, and the influence of high rank is distinctly to be traced on the registers. Charles, so common on the Continent from early times, hardly makes an appearance in England before our first king of that name. For one person called Albert or Victoria in the first quarter of the present century, there are now thousands. It was my lot to spend a good deal of my early life in lodgings, and I was soon convinced that Anne was almost the generic designation of maids in such establishments. "Hann, show the gen'leman the rooms," was the almost invariable order given by the landlady to one in search of apartments. Its frequency may be traced partly, no doubt, to its popularity in Puritan times as a Scriptural name, but more directly to the prestige of the last Stuart that reigned over this kingdom. Possibly, however, this is an instance of generic nomenclature, just as all soldiers are "Tommy Atkins's," and all sailors "Jack Tars."

One of the most melodious additions made in modern times to feminine nomenclature originated in the battle of Alma. Less important circumstances, however, sometimes give rise to names. I was acquainted with a gallant fellow who fought in the ranks of the Connaught Rangers in that action, who, when afterwards in my father's service, was presented by his wife with two daughters in two successive years.

The first was called Jane, and the second Phœbe, and on being asked why he had selected the latter name, he replied: "Well, sorr, ye see our eldest was borne in January, so we called her Jane; and the other was borne in February, so we just called her Faybie."

It is remarkable, considering how closely flowers have woven themselves into our affections, that only three have freely lent their names to our baptismal lists—namely, Rose, Violet, and Lily, Lilian, or Lilias. It is true we have borrowed the general term Flora, and Laura also comes to us through foreign channels. Daisie and Eglantine are met with, though more often in novels than in real life. Iris, also, is a woman's name and that of a beautiful flower; but each comes independently from a common source, and the same is the case with Hyacinth. The fact is, our English flower-names are quaint rather than pretty; they have suffered from the same cause as our personal names. We are not fastidious as to sound, leaning, indeed, to those words which are homely, and even ugly. Thus, while the Latin *pervinca*, Rousseau's favourite flower, becomes mellifluous *pervenche* on French lips, we grossly translate it *periwinkle*, a polysyllable, which it is to be hoped no girl will ever be asked to carry about with her. The primrose is as great a favourite as any, but its origin as a surname is traced to certain lands in Fife; and as for its near relation the cowslip, its modern as well as its ancient English name—paigle—puts it out of the question for baptismal purposes. Crabbe makes allusion to floral names:—

"'Why Lonicera wilt thou name thy child?'
I asked the gardener's wife, in accents mild:
'We have a right,' replied the sturdy dame;—
And Lonicera was the infant's name.
If next a son shall yield our gardener joy,
Then Hyacinthus shall be that fair boy;
And if a girl, they will at length agree
That Belladonna that fair maid shall be."

The classical renaissance had a marked effect upon our Christian names—at least on those of women, for we do not often encounter Strephon, Amyntas, or Corydon in real life. But Celia, Diana, Chloe, Cynthia, Lucrece, and Lydia perhaps owe their comparative permanence on the Continent to the benign influence of the Hôtel Rambouillet, and Phyllis and Phœbe are thoroughly naturalised in our villages to this day.

Family or fixed surnames were unknown in England before the Norman Conquest. In Saxon circles, indeed, men were distinguished by two names, indicative of their appearance, habits, or profession; but these were never hereditary. Feudal land-tenure, however, had initiated our conquerors into the convenience of territorial surnames, and their appearance in this island synchronises with the first Norman king. But the possession of land could only find names for a limited class, and Camden observes, "Certain it is that as the better sort, even from the Conquest, by little and little took surnames, so they were not settled among the common people fully until about the time of Edward the Second."

There is not much mystery about these territorial names—any doubts as to their origin may generally be solved by a reference to Burke; but there is one point connected with them which may be noted. It does not follow, because the bearer of a chivalrous surname may be found in humble or even destitute circumstances, that it is owing to distressing family vicissitudes, or that it is the fault of Fortune, because

> "It is still her use
> To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,
> To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow
> An age of poverty."

Sinclair, Charteris, Bruce, Montgomerie, Mowat (*de monte alto*), Muschet (*de monte fixo*), Hay, Vance (*de Vaux*), Weir (*de Vere*), and many others, are all names derived from lands in Normandy; but it must not be supposed that the multitudes who bear them are all poor relatives of the seignorial families. In early times, especially in the Highlands and on the Borders, where the clan system prevailed, it was common for men, casting about for a surname, to make use of that of their territorial chief. Again, there are many places in Great Britain which, having first yielded a territorial surname to a gentle family, afterwards supplied a local one, indicative of his origin, to many a tradesman, craftsman, or labourer. Country John, leaving his native fields or village to better his fortunes in the town, found himself rubbing shoulders with scores of other Johns: he would become known as John o'

Hastings, o' Musgrave, o' Haverington, according to his birthplace, and become the progenitor of a line of Hastings, Musgraves, or Harringtons, in no degree akin to the aristocratic personages who had already derived their family names from these places. This easy practice of calling a man after his native place did not escape the observation of Verstegan, one of the earliest analysts of personal names, who, writing in the seventeenth century, quotes the following lines:—

> "In 'ford,' in 'ham,' in 'ley,' in 'ton,'
> The most of English surnames run."

Thousands of English family names have arisen in this way; and just as one finds in *breccia* rock-fragments of older geological strata imbedded, so in these borrowed names there are often to be found the older names of those from whom the place was originally named. The following may be taken as examples:—

| Modern place-name and surname. | Original form. | Meaning. |
|---|---|---|
| Abingdon | Abbandûn | Abba's fort. |
| Aylesford | Æglesford | Ægle's ford. |
| Ashbury | Æscesbyrig | Æsc's stronghold. |
| Dowdswell | Dogodeswel | Dogod's well. |
| Effingham | Effingeham | Effa's house. |
| Grimstone | Grimaston | Grim's farm. |
| Hambledon | Hamelendûn | Hamela's fort. |
| Ormsby | Ormisby | Orm's dwelling. |
| Petridge (altered to surname of Partridge) | Pedanhrycg | Peda's ridge. |
| Ramsden | Remnesdûn | Remn's or Raven's fort. |
| Winslow | Uines-hlau | Uine's hill. |

There is a still further stage where a man's name, like Washington, originally derived from a place, is again conferred upon another place, owing to the distinction of the individual.

One significant fact will be noticed in examining surnames derived from localities, is that the frequency with which a place-name is so employed is in inverse ratio to the importance of the place. London, Edinburgh, and Dublin are most rare as family names, but almost every village of any antiquity in Great Britain has plenty of human namesakes. The reason for this is simple enough: in old times, as now, it was the countrymen who flocked into the great towns, not the towns-people who peopled the country. It is a very old piece of chaff against Scotsmen that they have spread themselves all over the world to avoid starving in their own country; hence people bearing the name Scott are very numerous compared with those answering to Inglis, who are only to be found, in limited numbers, near the Border. Against this may be set the fact that Scotland owed her independence, at a critical time, to one whose name means Welshman—*i.e.*, Wallace (Waleys)—and, at another, to one of direct Norman descent, bearing a foreign territorial surname—Bruce (de Brus).

The salient facts in the history of our nation should suffice to prevent us ever boasting of the purity of our blood. Successive waves of invasion have made the people (especially the well-to-do classes) thoroughly hybrid, and the strains of Celtic, Roman, Saxon, Dan-

ish, and Norman blood can never more be separated. But in addition to such wholesale influx, there was the sporadic settlement of foreign merchants indicated by such surnames as Fleming, Hansard (of the great trading Hanseatic League), Romayne, Holland, Allman, and Dollman (d'Almaigne), Lubbock (Lubeck), &c.

It might very likely sometimes be inconvenient, in unsettled times, for a settler to give exact reference to his last residence; hence, presumably, such surnames as Newcome and Newcomen, Strange and L'Estrange. But the Scottish family of Strang of Balcaskie, in Fife, simply bore the northern form of the adjective "strong"; although a cadet of that family, who became distinguished as an engraver and received knighthood, became known as Sir Robert Strange.

Akin to these surnames of origin are those of location, arising from the position of the dwelling of different individuals. They are innumerable, but it is only necessary to mention a few of them in order to illustrate a class which some people may find it interesting to trace out for themselves. As in surnames of origin the English preposition *of* or the French *de* was employed, so in locative surnames the connection was supplied by the preposition *at*, or less frequently *in*, corresponding to, and sometimes indistinguishable from, the French *à*, though sometimes *de* was employed, as in territorial titles. Thus, to take a well-known name, Thomas à Becket was Thomas at the becket or brooklet; the preposition has dropped

out and left the familiar Becket of the present day. Sometimes the preposition has been incorporated in the family name, as when John-de-lane or William-atte-wode left descendants known either as Delane or Lane, as Wood or Attwood. Who can number the generations reckoned as Lea (Lee, Leigh, Legh), Field, Moore, Wells (also Bywell and Attwell), Street, Cross, Down, Ridge and Attridge, Brook and Attbrook, Rivers, Flood, Shore, Cliffe or Clive, Mill or Mills, Combe and Atcombe, Kirke, Craig, Glen, and Forrest, of which each individual bears about with him an indelible record of some prominent object near which an ancestor happened to dwell when surnames were becoming fixed? Occasionally the meaning of the name is obscured by a classical aspect: perhaps the great authority on population, Malthus, was not aware that he owed his surname to a malthouse; and there are families of Bacchus extant now who may trace their descent, not from a wine-shop, but from a bakehouse.

The use of territorial and locative names has survived in the Lowlands of Scotland to this day. Not only are lairds habitually spoken of and addressed by the name of their estate or residence, but farmers in certain districts respond most freely to the names of their lands. There used to be an old fellow, tenant of a small farm on the Tig, a tributary of the Stinchar, in Ayrshire. One day he was cutting his oats, and a friend driving past along the road called out to him, "You're cutting your crop rather green, Chal-

loch." The old fellow never stopped mowing, but replied over his shoulder, "If the Lord disna ken when to ripen, Challoch-on-Tig kens when to maw."

Hitherto, in dealing with the territorial, natal, and locative classes of surnames, reference has only been made to the Anglian part of the population under the influence of Norman rule. The Celtic race, owing to their peculiar land-system, under which territory was the joint property of the sept or clan, never named men after lands or towns or natural features; but the Welsh, Irish, and Gaelic element must be taken into account in considering the three remaining classes of surname—viz.: the pure patronymic, the names from offices or trades, and those from personal characteristics, including "to-names" or nicknames.

Of all methods of surname, the patronymic is perhaps the most general and most direct; but Camden gives an excellent illustration of its inconvenience in the extent to which the Celts carried it:—

"In late times—in the time of King Henry VIII.—an ancient worshipful gentleman of Wales, being called at the pannell of a jury by the name of Thomas Ap William Ap Thomas Ap Richard Ap Hoel Ap Evan Vaghan, &c., was advised by the judge to leave that old manner; whereupon he afterwards called himself Moston, according to the name of his principal house, and left that surname to his posteritie."

Other Welshmen of high descent were content to merge the preposition, and Ap Robert became Probert;

Ap Rhys, Price; Ap Richard, Pritchard; Ab Owen, Bowen; Ap Hugh, Pugh. *Ab* in Welsh, meaning a son, corresponds to the Irish and Gaelic *mac*, of which the old Welsh form was *map* (now *mab*). Both came from a common source, *maccu*, genitive *maqvi;* the Welsh Celt perpetuated the labial, the Gaelic Celt the guttural, sound: thus Probert and MacRobert are precisely the same, both in meaning and ultimate etymology. But the Irish Gael made use of another form of patronymic by prefixing *ua*, race or grandson; as, Sorle ua Niaill — *i.e.*, Charles O'Neill. English people often think this "O'" is a contraction for "of."

Purely Celtic names are generally to be easily distinguished—though the late Mr Cosmo Innes vouches for one story to show that even in these one is apt to be deceived:—

"A Dublin citizen (I think a dealer in snuff and tobacco) about the end of last century had lived to a good age, and in great repute, under the name of *Halfpenny*. He throve in trade, and his children prevailed on him in his latter years to change the name, which they thought undignified, and this he did by simply dropping the last letter. He died and was buried as Mr *Halpen*. The fortune of the family did not recede; and the son of our citizen thought proper to renounce retail dealing, and at the same time looked about for a euphonious change of name. He made no scruple of dropping the unnecessary *h*, and that being done, it was easy to go into the Celtic rage, which Sir Walter Scott and 'The Lady of the Lake' had just raised to a great height; and he who had run the streets as little

Kenny Halfpenny came out (in full Rob Roy tartan, I trust) as *Kenneth MacAlpin*, the descendant of a hundred kings." [1]

As a rule, of course, English patronymics are more easily understanded of the people than those in Celtic speech. Yet, in order to trace the formation of the former, it is necessary to bear in mind the diminutives or pet abbreviations of Christian names, which were of old much more varied than those in use now. Our commonest pet names are made by adding *ie* or *y* either to the first syllable—as Frederick, Freddy; or to the whole name if a monosyllable—as Grace, Gracie. But in early times pet names were much more elaborate. The Saxons used *kin* and *cock*, and the Normans introduced *et* and *ot*, *en* and *on;* and with these, as well as from abbreviations pure and simple, the changes were rung interminably on Christian names. A few may be given here to assist in the recognition of others:—

| Christian name. | Pet name. | Patronymic. |
|---|---|---|
| William | Will | Williams.<br>MacWilliam.<br>Williamson.<br>Wills.<br>Wilson. |
| | Wilcock | Wilcocks.<br>Wilcox.<br>Wilcockson. |
| | Wilkin | Wilkins.<br>Wilkison.<br>Wilkinson. |

[1] Concerning some Scottish Surnames. By Cosmo Innes. Edinburgh: 1860.

| Christian name. | Pet name. | Patronymic. |
|---|---|---|
| William | Willet or Guillot | Willet.<br>Willetson.<br>Gillott. |
| | Willy | Willison. |
| | Willamot or Guillamot | Wilmot.<br>Guillemard. |
| | Willen or Gillon | Willing.<br>Gillon. |
| | Bill | Bilson. |
| | Guill | Gill.<br>Gilson.<br>Gilkens.<br>Gilkinson.<br>Gilkison. |
| Robert | | Roberts.<br>Robertson.<br>MacRobert.<br>Probert. |
| | Robin | Robins.<br>Robinson.<br>Robison.<br>Probyn. |
| | Dobb | Dobbs.<br>Dobson. |
| | Hob | Hobbs.<br>Hobson. |
| | Rob | Robbs.<br>Robson. |
| | Hobkin | Hopkins.<br>Hopkinson. |
| Philip | | Phillips.<br>Phillipson. |
| | Phip | Phipps. |
| | Philipot | Philpotts. |
| Richard | | Richards.<br>Richardson.<br>Rickards.<br>Pritchard. |

| Christian name. | Pet name. | Patronymic. |
|---|---|---|
| Richard | Rich | Rixon. |
| | Richie | Ritchie.<br>Ritchieson. |
| | Dick | Dick.<br>Dixie.<br>Dixon. |
| | Diccon | Dickens.<br>Dickenson. |
| | Hitchin | Hitchins.<br>Hitchison.[1] |
| | Hitchcock | Hitchcock.<br>Hitchcox. |

And so on, David giving patronymics from its variants —Dawe, Dawkin, Davie; Henry from Hal and Harry —Hallet, Halket, Harriet, and Hawkin; John from Jack and Jenkin; Simeon from Simkin; Mary from Mariot; Walter from Wat, Watkin, &c., &c. In short, the patronymics formed from abbreviations are much more numerous than those from the original name, and have long outlived the old endearing appellatives.

A whole essay might be written—nay, very many have been written—on the subject of surnames derived from offices and trades. They are a spontaneous growth wherever surnames are known, especially in those races where, as among the Celts, office and trade were hereditary. The commonest surname of all is Smith, even in Scotland, where a pure patronymic—Macdonald—holds the second place, and an allusive name—Brown—the third. The Celtic word

[1] Hutchins and Hutchinson are from diminutives of Hugh; and Hodgkins, Hodgkinson, from George.

for Smith—Gow—is common in the Highlands, Lefevre has established itself in England, and the Italian equivalent became known to us through the excellence of the blades made in the sixteenth century by Andrea Ferara, or Maestro Andrea dei Ferari, of Belluno. Mackintosh bespeaks lofty descent—*mac an toseaich*, the thane's son; on the other hand, in Stewart a lowly office has been raised to very high levels. It is, in fact, the "stye ward," from the Anglo-Saxon *stige weard*, the Master, not of the Horse, but of the Hogs—an important official in days when a lord's wealth was reckoned by his bestial, and gradually transferred to the chief officer of the household—the steward, *seneschallus* or *dapifer*. When the origin of the name is remembered, how trivial seem the squabbles whether it is rightly spelt with *u* or *w*. *W*, of course, is organic in the name, and was only altered to *u* to suit the French alphabet. Cook, Butler, Spencer, Chamberlain, Durward (doorward), Cator (caterer), have all risen in life.

Sometimes the same office or profession has given rise to very different surnames, as Grosvenor and Hunter. Thackeray and Reader do not seem to have much in common, but the ancestors of persons bearing these names must once have been *thackeres* and *reeders*—*i.e.*, thatchers and those who thatched with reeds.

As the regular clergy in the days when surnames mostly originated were under the rule of celibacy, there is something not altogether illustrious about certain patronymics both in Anglican and Celtic families.

Vickers and Parsons both imply the progeny of a vicar and a parson; MacNab is *mac an aib*, the abbot's son; MacTaggart, *mac-t-sagairt*, the priest's son; M'Chlery, *mac cleraig*, the clergyman's son; Macpherson, *mac phairsuin*, the parson's son; MacBriar, *mac brathair*, the friar's son. It is charitable to remember that in very early times of the Church the secular clergy were not commanded to abstain from marriage; and this may be held to account for what is recorded of the priest who had charge of the instruction of St Comgall: *quadam nocte cum clericus ille cum muliere dormivit.* On the other hand, the same excuse will hardly screen Lugudius Clodus, an ecclesiastic of Magh Breg, who, says Adamnan, was rich and much honoured by the people, but who choked on a piece of meat and died, *cum meretrice in eodem lectulo cubans.*[1]

The last of the four principal sources of surnames —that from personal qualities—is hardly less prolific than the other three, but their meaning is generally so obvious that it is scarcely necessary to deal with them in detail. But, as being common to both Teutonic and Celtic races, it may prove interesting to show how surnames of this class, though very different in appearance, may have the same meaning. The simplest way of doing this is to put a few of them in tabular form. It is necessary to bear in mind that the Celtic diminutive suffixes *an* and *ach* are frequently added to an adjective in applying it to a person.

[1] Adamnani Vita Sancti Columbæ, Lib. I., cap. xxx.

| English surname. | Celtic adjective. | Celtic surname. |
|---|---|---|
| White (with diminutive Whittuck) | Báu<br>Fionn | Bean, Macbean.<br>Finn, Finlay, Finagan. |
| Black | Dubh (pron. *doo*, *dow*, or *duv*) | Dow, Duff, Duffie, Macduff. |
| | Ciar (pron. *keer*) | Keran, Keiran. |
| Grey | Glas | Glass, M'Glashan. |
| Reid (red)<br>Ruddiman | Ruadh (*dh* mute) | Roy. |
| | Corcradh (*dh* mute) | Corkran, Cochrane. |
| Brown | Donn | Dunn, Donnan. |
| Long<br>Lang<br>Laing | Fada | M'Fadzean. |
| Bigg<br>Mickle | Mór | More, Moore.<br>Moran, M'Morran. |
| Little<br>Small | Beg | Beggs. |

It would be easy to prolong the list, but any one can follow the clue given at his own pleasure.

In early days, when Gaelic was giving place to Anglian as the speech of the commonalty in Scotland, members of the same family sometimes bore, one a Gaelic, the other a Saxon name. Thus, in a charter printed in Anderson's 'Diplomata Scotiæ,' No. 75, it is set forth how Richard de Morville, Constable of Scotland, in 1166, sells Edmund, the son of Bonda, and Gillemichel, his brother, to Henry St Clair. Here Edmund and Bonda are Saxon names, but Gillemichel is the Gaelic for "Michael's servant."

It might be supposed that the wants even of an exuberant population might be supplied by ringing

the changes on the abundant sources of nomenclature —baptismal and surname—already alluded to. But that is not so. Strange to say, it is in some of the remote and thinly populated districts that recourse is still had to "to-names" or nicknames to distinguish individuals, and this cannot be better illustrated than by quoting from a most amusing paper which appeared in 'Blackwood's Magazine' for March 1842.

"The fishers are generally in want of surnames. . . . There are seldom more than two or three surnames in a fish-town [the writer is referring to Aberdeenshire]. There are twenty-five George Cowies in Buckie. The grocers, in booking their fishing customers, invariably insert the nickname or *tee*-name, and, in the case of married men, write down the wife's along with the husband's name. . . . In the town register of Peterhead these signatures occur: Elizabeth Taylor, spouse to John Thomson, *Souples;* Agnes Farquhar, spouse to W. Findlater, *Stouttie*. . . .

"It is amusing enough to turn over the leaves of a grocer's ledger and see the *tee*-names as they come up: *Bucky, Beauty, Biggelugs, Collop, Helldom, the King, the Provost, Rochie, Stouttie, Sillerton, the Smack, Snipe, Snuffers, Toothie, Todlowrie.* Ladies are occasionally found who are gallantly and exquisitely called *the Culter, the Bear*, &c. Among the twenty-five George Cowies in Buckie there are George Cowie, *doodle;* George Cowie, *carrot;* and George Cowie, *neep* [turnip].

"A stranger had occasion to call on a fisherman in one of the Buchan fishing-villages of the name of Alexander White. Meeting a girl, he asked—

"'Could you tell me f'ar Sanny Fite lives?'

"'Filk Sanny Fite?'

"'Muckle Sanny Fite.'
"'Filk muckle Sanny Fite?'
"'Muckle lang Sanny Fite.'
"'Filk muckle lang Sanny Fite?'
"'Muckle lang gleyed [squinting] Sanny Fite.'
"'Oh! it's *Goup-the-lift* ye're seeking,' cried the girl; 'and fat the deevil for dinna ye speer for the man by his richt name at ance?'"

Mr Cosmo Innes corroborated this by his own experience. He quotes[1] from the records of Justiciary the names occurring in a case tried before the Spring Circuit of Aberdeen, 1844, in which John Geddes *alias* John Jack was indicted for assaulting John Cowie, *Pum.* Among the witnesses were Margaret Cowie, *Pum;* John Reid, *Joccles;* James Green, *Rovie;* John Geddes, *Jack son;* Alexander Geddes, *Duke;* and John Reid, *Dey,* all described as fishermen.

Mr Dudgeon[2] gives a more recent and even more remarkable instance of these totemic names. There is, as he truly says, no more matter-of-fact species of literature than the official register of voters, none is more rigidly scanned and pruned of all fanciful or extraneous matter, yet he was eyewitness that in the list of voters for the counties of Elgin, Banff, and Nairn, duly authenticated by the Sheriff, these nicknames are always entered. They are placed in inverted commas after each voter's name, thus:—

"William Flett 'Yankie,'
James Murray 'Costie Bird,'
George Mair 'Shy Bobbin,'"

[1] Scotch Surnames, p. 18.

[2] Origin of Surnames, p. 9.

—and so on through two or three hundred names like *Bukie, Caukie, Cock Carrot, Shavie, Rosie Bowie, Upple, Helen's Dod, Dosie, Gug, Bussie,* &c.

Truly it is refreshing to come upon such picturesque elasticity in close proximity to the ballot-boxes.

It must not, however, be supposed that all surnames that look like arbitrary nicknames were conferred in this way. The ancient practice of distinguishing shops by signs gave rise to a peculiar class of locative names; hence the frequency of such surnames as Sparrow, Roebuck, Rose, Nightingale, Oliphant (Elephant), Bell, and others.

The converse process to that which takes place in the use of "to-names," is the application of family names to manufactured articles as a stimulus to commerce. Some of the haughtiest patronymics have been affected thus to a degree which it will take generations to repair. Mackintosh, for example, no longer conveys the idea of the "thane's son," but that of a useful, though homely, article of clothing. There is no loftier name in history than Gregory, but the happy ingenuity of a physician who bore it has inseparably associated it with an admirable, but unpalatable, medicine. Keating was a good Anglo-Saxon family, but who is now able to divest it from its connection with flea-powder. Bass, Allsopp, and Guinness, have all won places in the peerage, but Bacchus and Dionysius were not more consciously convivial names in classic times than these are at this day. That Chesterfield and

Gladstone have a deeper significance than that of a coat or a bag must be taken as a tribute to the powerful individuality of two distinguished men; but a sandwich is severed from all trace of its origin in the ingenuity of a fastidious Earl of Sandwich; and exclusive dealing is so much more conveniently expressed by the verb "to boycott," that another generation will probably have forgotten all the tragic circumstances which gave rise to its adoption.

Instances are not wanting of unmerited dishonour overwhelming a respectable name. Dr Guillotin has been almost universally credited with the invention of the guillotine, but, in truth, up to the time of his death he protested continually against the association of his name with that machine. It is true that in the Constituent Assembly he advocated it as a merciful means of despatching criminals, compared with the nameless horrors that used to be inflicted on malefactors such as Damiens, whose mortal agony was judicially prolonged for three or four days. But the real inventor was Dr Louis, and the machine was known in the early days of the Terror as *Louison* or *Louisette*. Nevertheless, Guillotin's name became attached to it, and, after his death in 1814, his children obtained permission to change their family name.

The time for creating surnames has gone by, but it would contribute to the continuity of history, as well as to the seemliness of literature and of social life, if some of those now in use were recast in their original mould.

# BIRDS.

THERE are something under four hundred species of birds resident in or visitants, more or less regular, to the British Isles, and this number is less likely to increase than to diminish as the population becomes more dense. The wealth of woodland and uncultivated demesne which surround many of the homes of our landed gentry offers a convenient object of invective to the land reformer and of unkindly comment to the socialist, but the naturalist delights in it, for it gives a shelter to many an interesting tribe that would otherwise long since have been killed out, and tempts others to linger that might hurry on to other lands. Yet these sylvan shades screen many a senseless act of bloodshed, whereby numbers of rare and beautiful creatures pay the penalty of their resemblance to others really hurtful to game, or fall victims to naturalists of that class which pursues a bird to the death with bloodthirstiness proportioned to its scarcity. It is a common

complaint that gamekeepers include in their list of vermin many birds that are absolutely guiltless of injury to game: no doubt that is true, "and pity 'tis 'tis true"; but who is the real culprit? Not the gamekeeper; he is but a servant, and holds his place only so long as he does his master's pleasure. He is possessed of traditions as to the injurious habits of certain animals; they are a matter of faith with him, and so long as he believes them he will feel it to be his duty to protect his master's property. He does it quite openly, and takes a pride in the grisly display of corpses hanging on the back wall of the kennel. The true barbarian is the master who permits the massacre; the root of the evil is his unpardonable ignorance. Not indifference, mark you, for very few country gentlemen are indifferent to things concerning the kingdom of field-sports (it will be a bad day for their class—*pace* Mr Wordsworth—should they ever become so); it is sheer ignorance. Ask each of the first twenty squires you meet to name to you, out of the four hundred British birds, one hundred that he knows by sight. Very likely not one of them will be able to do so, still less tell you anything about their habits. Gamekeepers the culprits! Often and often has my blood boiled to see a poor owl, disturbed by the line of beaters and dazzled by the daylight, float noiselessly towards the forward guns, to be knocked over by a cigarette-smoking biped who perhaps never has done so much good to his fellow-creatures as his victim has in many a night's mouse-hunting.

Now what is the story revealed by impartial inquiry into the charge made against the owl's character? It happens that it is as simple a matter to analyse his diet as if the various articles composing it were set forth in a printed *menu;* for the owl, like other birds of prey, has the power of disgorging the indigestible parts of his food in what are called pelts or pellets. Dr Altum, a German naturalist, has lately been at praiseworthy pains in examining these pelts, and the facts revealed by him should once and for all remove all doubts as to, not only the harmless, but the useful habits of the owl. The tawny owl (*Strix stridula*) is the species that bears the worst character for poaching; in 210 pelts of this bird Dr Altum found the remains of 1 stoat (mark that, keeper!), 6 rats, 371 mice, 48 moles, 18 small birds, and many beetles and cock-chafers. Again, 706 pelts of the barn-owl produced 16 bats, 3 rats, 2520 mice, 1 mole, and 22 small birds.

Very creditable to the owls, it may be said; but at what time of year was this analysis made? Unless it was in June, when the young pheasants and partridges were about, it is worthless; because the owl who will take a sparrow will not disdain a young pheasant. Probably not, if he gets the chance; but the owl feeds only by night, when every young game-bird is safe under his mother's feathers.

I venture to commend this simple experiment to the attention of those who can hardly be numbered among the disciples of the Goddess of Intellect

so long as they senselessly persecute her chosen bird.

Surely it is not too much to expect that the day may come when the true sportsman will not be estimated *only* by the percentage of rocketers he can "tear from the skies" or the number of driven grouse he can pile around his box; when woodcraft shall be required to consist of more than the art of destruction, and to include some knowledge of the wild animals met with in a day's shooting. The mere pleasure derived from sport must be infinitely enhanced to one like the late Charles St John, to whom every passing bird was an object of interest, quite apart from its quality on the table or its value at the poulterer's. People are sometimes deterred from natural history by the polysyllabic names in scientific works; it is not the least necessary to begin with them, though the delight in classification is sure to follow open-air study.

When that day comes, the gamekeeper will take his cue from his master; the destruction of innocent birds will be forbidden, and Velveteens will then take as much pride in showing rare creatures on the wing as he now does in showing them rotting on a board. He will be as anxious to chronicle the nesting of rare visitors as the bailiff whose master, a former Earl of Mayo, as is said, imported some emus, and, having to go up to London, left strict injunctions that he was to be informed when they began to lay. Not long after he received the following letter from the bailiff:—

"My Lord,—I have the honour to inform your lordship that one of the emus has begun to lay. In the absence of your lordship, I have put the eggs under the biggest goose we have."

Does such a state of things seem Utopian? Then let me illustrate its possibility by an actual incident. Few birds have been subjected to more persecution or more strictly confined to the wildest parts of our country than the golden eagle. In the season of 1890 I was stalking in the forest of Achnacarry. We had sighted a large herd of deer on the opposite side of a wide corrie. To approach them it was necessary to descend a steep glen, with scattered birch and rowan offering a welcome cover. About half-way down the stalker suddenly stopped and pointed out to me a fine eagle sitting on a bare branch within five-and-twenty yards of us. The bird saw us almost as quickly, and left his perch, soaring off in majestic curves across the gulf. Of course it was an anxious moment, for it was very likely the deer would take the alarm; nevertheless, the stalker betrayed the feeling uppermost in his mind by ejaculating, "Noble bird, mistress eagle!" Strict orders have been maintained for years in this forest (all honour to its owner!) against the destruction of eagles, and the men now take pride in being able to show this king of "vermin." The incident gave me so much pleasure that, rather than have missed it, I would willingly have given up the issue of the stalk (which turned out successfully).

But of course the golden eagle is a gentleman requiring elbow-room. His taste for tender lamb makes him obnoxious except in the great deer-forests of the North; yet his visits to the low country are so rare that it is scarcely too much to ask that he might be more hospitably received there than is generally the case. Mr Ruskin says somewhere that if an angel from heaven were to alight upon British soil the first idea occurring to any one in sight would be to get a gun, in order, I presume, to add him to some local collection. This is exactly what happens when an eagle is seen. But if the golden eagle deserves persecution for his marauding habits, the same cannot be said, at least in the same degree, of other birds, scarcely inferior in beauty, which meet with similar treatment. Of these the kite is one—the *common* kite it is called in ornithological works; but alas! it is common no longer. There were plenty of them about the great woods of the English midlands within the memory of people still living, but it is now reckoned among the rarest of our birds. It was deplorable to read in the columns of the 'Field' (the leading journal of *sport*, forsooth!) that during the summer of 1889 five of these splendid birds were destroyed in a certain district of Wales. It cannot be claimed for them that they are harmless; they have a hankering for chickens about a farmyard, and, if kites were about, a careful eye would have to be kept over young pheasants at the coops; but they are not nearly so hurtful as their formidable size and appearance would

lead one to suppose. Clusius states that in his day they were plentiful in the streets of London and quite tame, being protected by the municipality on account of their usefulness as scavengers.[1]

Polygamy among wild birds, though rare, is not unknown, witness our own blackgame and pheasants; but it is said to be among kites and cuckoos alone that polyandry is practised. The female bird permits the addresses of several males; and this leads to an exception to the adage, "Hawks dinna pyke out hawks' e'en," for the males, fired by jealousy, engage in fierce conflicts at the nesting season.

Another bird of noble aspect that is now seldom seen is the buzzard. Though reckoned a woodland bird, he used to be not unfrequent a few years ago in the bare southern uplands of Scotland. A pair of these circling about the crags of some mountain solitude, uttering shrill cries, add almost as wild a charm to the landscape as the eagle. In such districts he may be acquitted of injury to winged game, his favourite food being "braxy"—*i.e.*, dead sheep. Yet he has paid a heavy penalty for his warlike mien and has been ruthlessly killed down. On many a height that he used to adorn he is seen no more. In his search for carrion he is specially liable to fall into that most horrible of all snares—a pole trap. Per-

[1] Since these lines were published in the 'Nineteenth Century,' I have had the pleasure of being informed that strict orders have been given on a large estate in South Wales that the kites, which have returned to breed there, are not to be molested.

haps the reader is in happy ignorance of that fiendish invention. Let me enlighten—even at the risk of sickening him; for unless these things are known, how can they be condemned? A pole is erected in some waste likely to be frequented by hawks; on the summit of it is fixed a strong steel trap, baited with a lump of meat. The trap is secured to the pole by a chain, so that when some soaring bird of prey descends to seize the lure he is caught by the leg, the trap falls off the pole, and the wretched animal dangles head downwards till the keeper comes to put him out of his misery. But the worst remains to be told. Owing to the fact that these traps are generally set in some lonely place—the summit of a hill or the middle of a peat-moss—they cannot be regularly visited; the trapped bird sometimes swings for days till a lingering death ensues. No one who has once met the fierce, full eye of a falcon caught in one of these hideous contrivances, who has seen the strong, bold wings, that once bore him so gallantly on the gale, now flapping helplessly against the pole, and the limb crushed in the cruel steel, can ever, one would think, forget the feeling of deep shame that burned in his heart. Yet this is part of the regular business of game-preserving on many moors in the north. Nothing need be said against the greedy black-backed gull, the carrion-crow, even the rook, when he takes to robbing nests, paying the thief's penalty; one would even judge leniently the man who, giving a high rent for a grouse-moor, objects to sharing the stock on it

with the lordly peregrine and the nimble merlin; but, in the name of all that is merciful, let them be done to death cleanly and fairly by powder and shot, and let no one with the remotest claim to rank as a sportsman sanction these infernal pole traps, which are just as likely to catch and torture an innocent kestrel that never struck at anything heavier than a field-mouse.

Even while these sheets are going through the press, I cut the following paragraph from a local paper in the South of Scotland, the very district which is suffering from the scourge of field-voles:—

"A few days ago a gamekeeper in the Stewartry went to examine a trap which he had set for hawks. He found one hawk in it, and, strange to say, its mate had been feeding it. No fewer than portions of twenty-two mice were discovered lying around it, including a number of voles or field-mice. It is alleged that the gamekeeper killed the hawk, although such proof was given of its being the farmer's friend."

Surely this is a signal case of stupid cruelty. The species of hawk is not mentioned, but in all probability the victim was a kestrel.

Mr Robert Gray describes another inhuman method of destroying the hen-harrier:—

"Keepers, on finding a nest, usually wait until the eggs are hatched, and are in the habit of killing all the young birds except one, which they fasten by the leg to a stake, and thus oblige to remain there, even after being fully fledged, until an opportunity occurs for shooting the old birds. This is sometimes but too easily accomplished, as

they continue bringing prey to the tethered captive long after it should have been hunting the moors on its own account."

Cruelty is hateful wherever it is practised; but, enacted among the fairest scenes of nature, it seems to take a deeper shade by contrast.

I think I hear the snort of contempt with which the term "innocent kestrel" may be received by some. Nevertheless no epithet was ever more strictly accurate; this bird is as harmless to game as a water-hen. Apply the same test to the pelts of the kestrel or windhover as Dr Altum did to those of the owl, and no feathers will be detected in them. He feeds on mice, frogs, and coleopterous insects. A true falcon, as shown by the second pen-feather of the wing being longest; one of the five British species of falcon, still the commonest, but fast dwindling in numbers, a very Ariel among fowls, he loves

> "To ride
> On the curl'd clouds."

His graceful flight—now cleaving the air with strong, rapid wing-strokes, now poised against the breeze almost motionless but for a tremulous movement of the pinions, and then veering away in wide curves to hover again over some likely mouse-ground—is a sight of which the eye never wearies. Some few landowners, more enlightened than their fellows, have forbidden his destruction, otherwise he would by this time have become as scarce as his near relative,

the hobby; but this does not protect him when he roves into less friendly territory.

Would that such birds could know the lands of their friends from those of their foes! It is only a few years since the last pair of eagles (the white-tailed kind, *Haliaëtus albicilla*) known to breed in the south of Scotland disappeared. Year after year these splendid birds had their eyrie on the flanks of Cardorcan in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, till one unlucky day they were found transgressing on the territory of a neighbouring lord, and paid the penalty of death. There is a tantalising passage in a description of these Galloway hills among the Macfarlane MSS. in the Edinburgh Advocates' Library, showing that four animals, at least, have disappeared from the fauna of the district since the beginning of last century.

"In the remote parts of this great mountain are very large red-deer; and about the top thereof that fine bird called the mountain partridge, or, by the commonalty, the tarmachan, about the size of a red-cock, . . . makes its protection in the chinks and hollow places of thick stones from the insults of the eagles, which are in plenty, both the large grey and the black, in that mountain."

One peak of the hill referred to (the Merrick, 2700 feet) still bears the name of Benyellary, that is, *beann iolaire*, the eagle's hill; and ptarmigan are said to have been last seen there in the dry summer of 1826 —the "year of the short corn," as the country people call it.

Perhaps it may be interesting to record the fate of the last golden eagle bred in these southern uplands. About the year 1835 a pair of eaglets were taken from the eyrie on a precipitous face of Cairnsmore. One of them died from unskilful treatment, the other was rescued by Mr Stewart of Cairnsmore, and given by him to the Earl of Galloway. It lived for some time at Cumloden; but in a furious gale the wooden shed which it inhabited was overturned, and the bird escaped. Some months afterwards a pedlar was traversing the wild road that passes by Clattering-shaws from New Galloway to Newton-Stewart. It was hard frost at the time. Suddenly he was alarmed by a large bird lighting on the road before him, and, as he thought, threatening to attack him. He killed it with a blow on the head from his stick. It was the tame eagle from Cumloden, which, being hard pressed for food, had come, poor fellow, to beg from the wayfarer. Thus died the last golden eagle bred in the Lowlands of Scotland—for the parent birds never returned to their eyrie.

There is one beautiful bird upon whom the perversity of nomenclature has been peculiarly oppressive. "Give a bird a bad name and shoot him" is the verdict of Jeddart justice upon more than one guiltless creature, so it is not surprising that a bird styled variously the fern-owl, night-hawk, or goat-sucker, should be hardly dealt with. All these are misleading titles, for it is neither an owl nor a hawk, but a member of the beneficent family of *Chelidones* or

swallows, and it can neither suck goats nor anything else. The only good popular name for it is the night-jar, as those can testify who have learned to associate its vibrating cry with the cockchafer's hum, the nightingale's song, the scent of hawthorn, and other accompaniments of a warm evening in early summer. In a list of so-called vermin destroyed between 1850 and 1854 by the same keepers who killed the last eagles of Cardorcan, there occurs the item—thirty-three fern-owls. If you ask why they are destroyed, you will probably be told they suck the milk of cows; if you press for an instance when they have been seen to do so, you will be told that old people *say* they do it, and, anyhow, they suck eggs. Suck eggs! it would be as reasonable to accuse a Chelsea pensioner of tickling trout or stealing deer. It is physically impossible for this bird to suck anything, for his gape is wide and shallow, plentifully fringed and specially formed for catching moths. Besides, he feeds by night, like the owls, when the eggs in all well-regulated nests, except his own and the owl's, are covered. This is one of the birds which exhibit the touching practice of feigning to be crippled, in order to lure intruders from their young. The female night-jar is a most accomplished actress in this respect. I once followed one for more than a hundred yards, pretending to be deceived by her flopping and scrambling over the ground: now and then she would let me come close to her, as she sat up with drooping wings and gaping beak, hissing like a snake; indeed I began

to think she really was winged, when suddenly she rose and skimmed away over the bracken.

In spite of the unthinking mischief wrought or permitted by sportsmen, it must not be supposed that their influence has been altogether adverse to the preservation of wild birds. Far otherwise; but for the shelter of quiet woodlands and wastes reserved for game, many native species would long before this have been numbered with the past; game-birds would first have been hunted to extinction, then lesser fowls would have become the objects of pursuit, till, as it is in many parts of the continent of Europe, the song of the thrush would have been as seldom heard as the hooping of the wild swan. Wordsworth failed to persuade his fellow-countrymen with leisure or means

> "Never to blend their pleasure or their pride
> With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels;"

and it is lucky that he did not succeed, else our *ferœ naturæ* would have fallen into less discriminate and less merciful hands. Despite his jealousy of any species supposed to interfere with his beloved grouse and pheasants, the sportsman has a kindly regard for most living creatures. All that is required is that this regard should be made a little more intelligent and catholic. A great deal of squeamish nonsense is talked, and more is written, about the cruelty of field-sports; the best answer is, that if there were no battues there would be no pheasants.

It is a matter of feeling, not easily to be decided by arithmetic, where legitimate sport ceases and slaughter begins; there *is* a line somewhere, which every owner of coverts must draw according to his judgment; but whether the bag consist of scores or of hundreds, the pheasants or the grouse, could they be consulted, would affirm with one voice, "'Tis better to be hatched and shot than never to be hatched at all;" and unless they are preserved for shooting they never would come into existence, that is all.

It is, therefore, to sportsmen we must look for aid in preventing the extinction of some of our fast-failing species. Once let them know something about the mischief that is being done, and, depend upon it, the much-abused gamekeeper will find it to be his interest to change his practice. There is one bird which may freely be made over to his tender mercies. As the rat is among mammals, so among birds is the carrion-crow; whether attired in the black uniform of the native species or in the grey and sable motley of the migratory hooded crow (there seems to be no specific distinction between them), he has and deserves no friends. Mr Robert Mudie sums up the indictment against him truthfully enough:—

"They prowl about even to the doors of the houses, and into poultry-yards, and are voracious devourers of eggs, young poultry, young rabbits, and young game, even more so than the regular birds of prey. They punch out the eyes of weak animals, hawk at birds on the wing, open shelled mollusca on the sea-shore."

Against this heavy charge there is not a single amiable trait to be recorded; nor does he serve any useful purpose, so far as can be seen, in this country, where we are able to dispose of our own carrion. Neither is there the slightest fear of his being lost to our fauna, for he exists in numbers, in different disguises of plumage, throughout the northern hemisphere, and the home stock is constantly replenished by immigration. "Hoodies" have become very plentiful near London; numbers of them breed in the grounds of Chiswick and in the woods near Wimbledon; and the keepers in Regent's Park have to shoot them in order to protect the young ducks.

Probably it is better not to spoil a good case by asking too much; otherwise great is the temptation to put in a word for the magpie, now never to be seen in some counties, and nowhere abundant in England or Scotland. He is a gay and handsome rascal, but a rascal he is—past praying for. Scarce as he has become in this island, he is still a common object in an Irish landscape. Some years ago I was staying at a village in the north on a fishing excursion; magpies roosted in numbers in a wood hard by. My companion, coveting some tail-feathers for cleaning his pipe, stationed himself one evening at a place on the highroad where they used to cross in flying home. He shot seventeen, and I must confess that the sight inspired in me some uncharitable feelings towards the marksman.

There is so much character, even though it be of a

sinister cast, about this family of birds, that it is difficult to part from them without mentioning them all. The raven (now happily the object of careful protection in some of his northern breeding-places), the rook, the jackdaw, the jay (would that keepers would be blinder to his faults and kinder to his virtues!), each is a bird of wits, whose merits and demerits cannot be weighed in a paragraph. Passing over these, it is a pleasure to find one of the group of absolutely blameless character, whose increasing scarcity cannot be laid at the gamekeeper's door, but is due to the ardour of the collector (of whom more presently) and the high price which is paid for young birds to rear as pets.

"The chough," writes Mudie, no less accurately than picturesquely, "is as much a bird of the breeze as the jay is of the shade and shelter of the woods. The loose and comparatively downy plumage of the jay enables it to glide between trees, and softens its collision with branches, while the firm plumage of the chough enables it to bear the storm when beating on the rocks in which it takes up its abode."

A charming bird it is, the chosen one of St Columba, with its jetty plumage with beetle-blue reflections and carmine bill and feet, but it is only in a few parts of our rocky western coasts that it may still be admired. Even there it falls a frequent victim to that senseless destroyer, the shore-loafer.

The destruction of birds of prey, much as it is to be deplored in the extent to which it has been carried,

has favoured the increase of many species whose interests were not considered when it was undertaken. None has derived more benefit from it than a species of that very group, the *Corvidæ*, last under consideration. Many people must have noticed the great increase of late years in the numbers of starlings. It is not long since, in certain parts of the country, its pretty pale-blue egg, of a hue more watery than the turquoise of the thrush, was prized by boys as somewhat of a rarity; now it is among the commonest of birds. Though afflicted with disreputable relatives, the fair fame of the starling has never been smirched even by peccadilloes. He earns an honest living, for which he has to travel far and work hard. Being mainly an animal feeder, the number of grubs and insects which a flock of four or five hundred starlings pick up in the course of a day must be stupendous.

They are fond of roosting in reeds, and it is pretty to watch them collecting in an autumn evening and going through aerial drill. Parties of from five to fifty who have been out foraying during the day begin to arrive towards sunset: the numbers soon mount up to hundreds, even thousands, and the whole flock, constantly increasing in numbers as twilight begins, wheels and spreads, veers and deploys over the surface of the water with admirable precision. Then what a whistling and chattering as they settle to rest upon the bending reeds; if a man shouts or claps his hands, what instant silence; and next what a rush of wings as the flock rises and begins its evolutions over again.

Gregarious though he is, the starling never loses his individuality; some seem to prefer solitude or the company of two or three of their kind. He is worth listening to as he sits on a winter morning on the house-top. He is an excellent mimic, and may be heard repeating to himself in a low tone snatches of the songs of summer birds, just as people returning from the opera hum over (not always with due appreciation from their companions) bars of the most taking airs. Then he breaks off into the sharp chuck-chuck of the water-hen, the coot's croak, or the plover's pipe. Altogether he is a most fascinating bird (though he has never got the poets fairly on his side yet), if it is only for the memories of dead summers that his chatter awakes.

Association is nearly as readily stirred by sounds as by scents. Often and often the laughing cry of the gulls in St James's Park transports me to the shores of a certain Highland loch, dark-bosomed, barred with streaks of intense light, and fringed with masses of golden tangle. The sombre pile in Downing Street seems to transform itself into the towering bulk of Bennaveoch, rising with fold upon fold of brown heather and velvety fern into cool tones of grey crag and shadowy cleft to where his riven brow cuts dark and sharp against the morning clouds. I seem to hear the lap of the tide against the stones, and the path transforms itself into a white road winding along the shore, not between black iron hurdles, but banks of green turf and hazel copse.

Another rural sound there is which of late years has gratified the ears of Londoners. In the spring of 1883 a pair of wood-pigeons built their nest in St James's Park. It is said they were part of an importation from Belgium, escaped from confinement; but whether that is so, or whether they had wandered in from the country, they were the true English ring-dove. How they have fared may be judged from the fact that one Sunday in August 1889 I counted no fewer than seventy-three cropping the young clover in the turf behind the Row in Hyde Park. All their native wariness has been laid aside; you can watch them running over the sward, so near sometimes that you could almost touch them with a walking-stick, preening their somewhat sooty plumage and actually lying on their sides like a spaniel in the sun: and all this in the presence of hundreds of passers-by. Never was there a more welcome addition to the London fauna. "Take *two* cows, Taffy!" sounds dreamily from amid the foliage of the plane-trees, till you can almost swear you scent the odour of the larch woods, or hear the breeze sighing in the pines.

As flowers gain the affection of man chiefly by pleasing his eye, so it is through his ear that wild birds endear themselves. They are too shy in their habits, too quick in motion, their flight too far transcends his sluggish gait for him to make near acquaintance with them, unless with elaborate precaution. But how lavishly they fill the air with sound! Let alone song-birds, how oppressive would be the silence

of the country if there were no cawing rooks or crowing cocks, no wail of curlew or clamour of wild-fowl. Even in the depth of our winters there is no silence. The wild-fowler, astir before dawn, knows this. The land is deep with snow, every pool is hard bound in ice, only the springs and the muddy shore flats are green and soft. As he stations himself at the chosen spot, and the east begins to pale, he hears many sounds familiar to his ear—the clangour of a string of wild geese passing to the shore, the whistle of ducks' wings overhead, with an occasional quack from the leader of the flock, the pipe of the plover, and the screech of the heron out on the shore. Where there are birds there cannot be silence.

MacGillivray, the ornithologist, thorough scientist as he was, could not always confine himself to the dry details of his favourite subject. Every now and then he was carried away into a modest rhapsody, and the thrush's song seemed to him like the unknown tongues of the prophets, capable of interpretation if one had but the key. He tried to transpose it into literature; it looks awkward enough so, but no one is likely to succeed better than he did:—

> "Dear, dear, dear,
> In the rocky glen,
> Far away, far away, far away
> The haunts of men;
> There shall we dwell in love
> With the lark and the dove,
> Cuckoo and corn rail,
> Feast on the bearded snail,

Worm and gilded fly,
Drink of the crystal rill
Winding adown the hill
Never to dry.
With glee, with glee, with glee
  Cheer up, cheer up, cheer up here ;
Nothing to harm us, then sing merrily,
  Sing to the loved one, whose nest is near.
Qui, qui, queen quip ;
Tiurru, tiurru, chipiwi,
Too-tee, too-tee, chin-choo,
Chirri, chirri, chooee,
  Quin, qui, qui."

Perhaps the best part of this is the five lines of gibberish at the end, which really recall the original. What a wonderful melody it is! One is apt to underrate it when every grove has been resounding with song for months. To feel its full influence, go into the woods some still evening in mild February weather, when the grey cloud canopy opens towards the west, and pale rays of sunshine steal level across the landscape. The dead leaves under foot, too damp to rustle, light up into clear tones of russet and ochre; the moss, spangled with hanging moisture, is touched into sheets of malachite green, the stems of the oak copse gleam like frosted silver against the dark sky. Hark! there it is at last—the voice that has been silent through all the sullen months, clear and faultless as ever, in all those well-remembered trills and runs. As your ear drinks it in, you seem to feel the warmth of summer suns, and bathe in the brightness of far-off days; then, as you take your way home

through the deepening dusk, perhaps it occurs to you that although these be days when every properly instructed person mentions a flower as a phanerogamous inflorescence, and sees, as the primary object of its loveliness, neither the glory of God nor the pleasure of man, but the attraction of insects to secure cross-fertilisation; when to say that the "morning stars sang together" when the corner-stone of the earth was laid, is to use a poetic but highly unscientific metaphor, and to allude to the way of a bird in the air as one of the things "past finding out," is felt to be a slight upon our powers of research—in spite of all this, you feel there are still some souls which respond gratefully to the Song of the Three Children: "Oh, all ye fowls of the air, bless ye the Lord; praise Him and magnify Him for ever."

An appeal has been made to sportsmen in the earlier pages of this paper, and perhaps it is not being over-sanguine to expect that it will meet with some response, for there is the example of not a few of their own number to encourage that hope. There remains an appeal, less hopeful but not less urgent, to be made to another class—the collectors. Alas! here we have a totally different set of considerations to be dealt with. The high price given by taxidermists for the skins of rare species combines with the enthusiasm of managers of local museums to reduce to a minimum the safety of occasional and coveted visitors. With the first influence it is impossible to grapple: so long as certain birds command a good

price in the market, collectors will carry on their work, and to ask a taxidermist to stop buying good specimens would be very much like proposing to a miller that he should stop grinding corn, or to a publican that he should stop selling beer. But with the other kind, the local naturalist, surely he may learn the better way. It is a good thing, the growing love of natural science and archæology in our provincial towns, but it requires guidance. Those who come under its influence should have the spirit of these words of Lord Lilford rubbed into them:—

"This beautiful species (the golden oriole) is one of the many summer visitors to the continent of Europe, which, as I am firmly persuaded, only requires protection and encouragement to become tolerably common with us. At present it is an annual visitor, in small numbers, to our eastern and southern counties, and has been known to breed in England on several occasions; but most of the records of its appearance in our islands are accompanied by the statement that the specimen is in the hands of some local taxidermist, these artists being, with few exceptions, always ready to give a good price, and demand a much better one, for an oriole, or indeed, any unfortunate and uncommon straggler to our shores."

It is sadly true. No Wild Birds or Small Birds Protection Acts prevail against this stupid practice; and what can be more dismal than a collection of stuffed birds? Glossy and shapely though they may be when they are first set up, they soon begin to get dim and unsightly. Even in that princely collection

in the Natural History Museum at South Kensington, all the loving care of an enthusiastic professor and a practised staff cannot protect them from the tarnishing touch of time. Now Lord Lilford is engaged at the present time in a work which ought to supersede every stuffed collection except the national one. He is publishing in parts his 'Coloured Figures of the Birds of the British Isles,' a work of exquisite beauty and permanent worth. Setting aside Gould's figures in elephant folio, which, though splendid works of art, are unmanageable from their size, and Dresser's noble work, which, however, includes all European birds, no series illustrating British birds has ever been undertaken equal to this, which is in the convenient size of large octavo. Of infinitely more beauty than stuffed specimens, these figures would be more attractive and equally useful to the students in our towns. Turn, for example, to the three plates in Part IX., illustrating the three phases of the ptarmigan's plumage. Fidelity to nature could hardly be carried further. The figure of the bittern in Part VII., taken from live specimens in his lordship's aviary, show the very action and expression of the bird. Some of the plates, besides their scientific accuracy, are perfect little pictures, such as that of the bullfinch in Part VIII., worthy of a tasteful frame—and all of them include pleasant scraps of landscape or studies of flowers and foliage characteristic of the life-history of the animal. These, then, are things of beauty and use, practically imperishable, and illustrating British ornithology with

far more accuracy and far more vividly than a crowd of dusty, distorted, stuffed skins. Lord Lilford's work (now in progress) only requires to be known to have as many admirers as there are lovers of birds, and as many subscribers as can afford it.

A last word, and on a painful subject. It is strange that bird-lovers should so often develop into bird-jailers. One would think that the most ingenious punishment that could be devised for a bird is to deprive it of that faculty which has been the envy of man in all ages—the power of flight. To take a consummate piece of mechanism specially and exquisitely adapted for certain work, so to maim it or so to place it that that work can never be performed, seems a clumsy way of showing affection: but that is just what is done by well-disposed people in many an English home. Yet it is told of the stern ascetic and relentless moralist, William Law, whose nerve never flinched from contemplating the most realistic doctrine of eternal punishment, that he could never see a caged bird without feeling an almost irresistible impulse to release it.

Walking one hot May morning down that grimmest of all thoroughfares, Victoria Street, bewailing, as I saw the dry white clouds floating across the strip of blue overhead, the unkind fate that kept me from green fields and pleasant river-banks, I chanced to look down an area. There, in a little low cage, on a withered piece of turf, was a wretched, restless prisoner—a lark, ceaselessly fluttering up and down the

few inches the height of his cage allowed him, and thrusting his breast hopelessly against the wires. How I longed to let him out, to bid him obey the irresistible impulse to rise and pour out the marvellous volume of sound pent in his little body, to seek a mate before the happy season of love was over, and on breezy down or springing corn-field forget the torments to which stupid senseless man had condemned him! It is a threadbare theme—the sorrows of a caged bird, yet perhaps no one has ever thoroughly realised what suffering is involved in being able to fly and being forbidden to do so. All children and most grown persons have, in different ways, a kindly feeling for birds; would that they would show it in less ogreish fashion, and spend pains on developing rather than warping and destroying their special faculties!

# EDUCATION.

*An Address to the Wigtonshire Branch of the Educational Institute: January* 1892.

Ladies and Gentlemen,—

I AM not unfamiliar with the sensation of being placed on a platform and of addressing such of my fellow-creatures as may be found with patience to listen to me; but when I reflect on the character and composition of this meeting, I ask myself, who am I that I should presume to offer counsel to the teachers of Wigtonshire?

*Dicite quis, medici, medicis medicabitur ipsis?*

Tell me, O physicians, who shall prescribe for physicians themselves? Not I, surely, for I am painfully conscious of a miserable educational record. An idle schoolboy, an unsuccessful collegian, having now arrived at the meridian of life, I am toiling painfully in the noontide heat to overtake some, at least, of the work which ought to have been done in the fresh cool hours of morning. I remember when, after a short,

inglorious career at Oxford, I took leave of my tutor, he shook his head reproachfully and said, "The day will come when you will be forced, for your own amusement, to read those writings which you are turning from to-day." His words have come true to the letter; and now I have to snatch intervals from the business of life to acquire that knowledge which ought to have been laid up long ago. Therefore, gentlemen, in venturing to address the Wigtonshire Branch of the Educational Institute, I am very much in the position of the converted housebreaker lecturing a bench of magistrates. In a worse position, indeed; for he, at least, might be able to tell his hearers something they did not know before; but from what storehouse can I produce information or suggestion which is not already in your possession? I can but offer a few observations on the general work of your profession, made from the standpoint of one who is in keen sympathy with the peculiar trials inseparable from a teacher's life, and anxious to secure the fullest harvest from the seed which it is your constant task to commit to the soil.

Speaking as an outsider, that seems to me to be the trying characteristic of the profession of teaching.

> "Hos ego versiculos feci, tulit alter honores:
> Sic vos non vobis."

Ye are sheep producing fleeces, but not for yourselves. Ye labour, but another reaps the fruit of your toil. Ah, but your toil is not thrown away; you have

a lofty office committed to you—lofty not only in its object, but also in that it must be wrought unselfishly. There must be times when your labour seems to you to be sheer drudgery; when you must be weary of ferrying passengers over the same stream, and returning for more, without leisure even to wait and watch whither those bend their steps whom you have landed on the further shore. Often you must long for release from the oar, so that you might voyage on your own account, upon the archipelago of research. We must all feel for you and with you in this—all, that is, who have the power of thought. But there should be present to you also, as there is present with us, a sense of the dignity of your standing. Titles of honour once had a significance which they do not bear now: a duke was *dux*, one who leads, but it is not every duke who can lead in the right way; an earl was *jarl*, a hero, alas! I have known earls with little of the heroic about them. But your title of Master (which in the days of our grandfathers was affectionately rendered to you in Latin—*dominie*)—your title of master is no unmeaning one, for you are the masters of letters, masters of arts, the masters of the key that unlocks the gate of wisdom.

I trust that I carry you with me in distinguishing between knowledge and wisdom. It is true that knowledge is the key to the gate of wisdom, but there be many holding the key who never open the gate. There can, it is true, be no wisdom without knowledge, but there is plenty of knowledge without wis-

dom, and a knowing fellow does not always grow into a wise man.

We are passing a critical era in our national education. We have just closed the first year in which, in our land, primary education has been declared to be without money and without price. Everything seems to favour us. Public opinion, long sluggish and difficult to move, sets strongly with us: the Church, which, under what seems to us the blind and inhuman policy of her leaders, was in the middle ages the unrelenting foe to knowledge, now smiles encouragement and lends all the weight of her powerful organisation in aid of our work; is it a matter for wonder, then, that some of us, who are deeply concerned in the welfare of our country, are specially concerned in the course which is about to be taken; and in this time of great promise, we stand not without anxiety waiting the development of so momentous a scheme? If, gentlemen, I proceed to offer a few remarks for your consideration on this weighty subject, do not put them down to my frowardness or regard them as rash meddling with a province in which I have no concern. It is probable—nay, it is certain—that, speaking from my standpoint without the profession, I will not take a view identical with you, who stand within the profession; but I should be paying you a poor compliment if, having undertaken to speak on the subject, I left you in any doubt as to my real views, however immature or divergent from yours these views may be.

Now, if I were asked to give my notion of right education, I should not employ words of my own, but I should quote a sentence from a modern writer closely connected with this county — a teacher to whom I owe far more than I can ever repay. "The first use of education," says John Ruskin, "is to enable us to consult with the wisest and greatest men upon all points of earnest difficulty; . . . to appeal to them when our own knowledge and power of thought fails; to be led by them into wider sight and purer conception than our own; and receive from them the united sentence of the judges and council of all time, against our solitary and unstable opinion." You see that is exactly what I have done in this case. On a point of earnest difficulty, I have consulted one of the wisest men of our time; where my knowledge and power of thought failed, I have appealed to him, and I have given you his sentence rather than my solitary and unstable opinion. But see in what further difficulty it has landed us—in the very thick of that controversy which has been carried on so long, and is raging hotter now than ever, whether the true object of education be, as Montesquieu said, to *form* heads or to *fill* them. Here is the whole gist of the question between the classical and the modern school. Ruskin, you see, leans to the side of forming the head rather than filling it. Neither he nor any one else would maintain that a knowledge of Latin and Greek was in itself as useful to a man entering life as a knowledge, say, of shorthand or book-keeping. But he holds that,

in order to give capacity to the understanding, and to arm a man for the conduct of life, it is wise to sacrifice instruction for the sake of education. Between education and instruction, as it seems to me, there is the same difference as between wisdom and knowledge. Young human beings are pliant instruments, you can teach them almost anything—to train them is a greater matter.

The French writer Guyau is peculiarly luminous on this point. He denounces as a fallacy the view that intellectual education has for its object the acquirement of useful knowledge. Its sole aim, he says, is to develop the mind, not in one direction, but in all. "Outside the sum total of the narrow and positive science indispensable in practical life" (I call your attention to these words, for I shall have occasion to revert to them presently), "all restricted scientific instruction is sterile." Now, whatever direction it may take in the future, you will agree with me that the aim of education in this country in the past has been mental development rather than scientific information or technical instruction. We have had nearly twenty years' experience of compulsory education in this country; millions of our children have passed through the schools; what has been the result on the mental development of the nation? It is somewhat difficult to find an efficient test. Granted that it is but a rude one, let us take Mr Ruskin's. "The first use of education is to enable us to consult with the wisest and the greatest men on all points of difficulty." The only

means of applying that test which occurs to me is to examine the returns of the Free Libraries now, happily, becoming so common in all our populous places. Plenty of people make use of them—is it the "wisest and greatest of men" that they consult? Alas, no! for every ten works of deep thought and wise inquiry into life's enigma that are asked for, it is no exaggeration to say that there are a thousand ephemeral works of fiction. Readers still for the most part turn to books only for pastime; they

> "Love to hear
> A soft pulsation in their easy ear;
> To turn the page and let the senses drink
> A lay that shall not trouble them to think."

Do not misunderstand me. I am not underrating the value of fiction, whether as a recreation or as a means of developing certain valuable qualities of mind. But when we find that the result of our scheme of education is a demand at the libraries for one hundred novels for every single work of science, history, or philosophy, then we are driven to the discouraging conclusion that, though knowledge comes, wisdom still tarries.

I am reminded of what was once told me by one who had been private secretary to Mr Disraeli. That statesman used to receive many books as gifts from the authors. His secretary was directed to reply in one unvarying formula, "Mr Disraeli intends to lose no time in perusing your interesting work." Now I am not prepared to defend that two-edged phrase on the

ground of candour, yet I could wish that fewer people would "lose time" in the perusal of trashy fiction.

Think not that I am imputing shortcoming to the teachers. I believe they have done their part faithfully and well. I know that they are bound within certain limits by the requirements of the Code. But I would venture to remind them, and still more urgently would I remind school-managers, that a number of optional subjects are included within the four corners of the Code, and that a wise regard to these optional subjects must have a marked effect upon the results of your labours.

We have seen that Mr Ruskin's ideal of education has not yet been fulfilled; let us turn to some of the older educational precepts, for this is a subject that occupied the attention of mankind even in the early days of civilisation.

The Persians were a powerful nation, and their education code was an exceedingly simple one. "Let a boy," thus it ran, "learn to ride well, to shoot straight with the bow, and to tell the truth. That sufficeth." But, though the Persians were a highly civilised race, the conditions under which they lived were totally different to those of modern life in this densely peopled country. I think we may find a closer analogy to our circumstances in Italian society under the later Roman emperors. One of the sterner and wiser moralists of that era, the satirist Juvenal, seems to me to have summarised the whole scope and aim of sound education in a simple phrase, *Mens sana*

*in corpore sano.* A healthy mind in a healthy body. This seems to be the kernel of the whole matter. It forces upon our attention that which we, in our eagerness, are too likely to overlook—namely, that the intellectual life rests on a physical basis; that before you can get satisfactory mental results you must secure adequate physical vigour. That great pioneer of the intellectual movement in England, Francis Bacon, insists upon this at great length in his 'Advancement of Learning.' "This various and subtle composition and fabrick of man's body hath made it as a curious instrument, easy to be distempered; therefore the poets did well to conjoyn musick and medicine in Apollo, for the genius of both these arts is almost the same."

See at what pains men foremost in intellectual achievement have been to keep their bodies in good health. Vasari tells us how Leonardo da Vinci, that intellectual giant, believed horse-exercise to be so indispensable to enabling him to carry on his work, that although he was often in dire straits of poverty, he never could be persuaded to sell his horses or dismiss his grooms. Goethe was so devoted to swimming, skating, and riding, that his praise of these exercises sometimes verges on the extravagant. Humboldt, who was a sickly, delicate youth, inured himself to exercise and fatigue, without which training he never could have carried out his fruitful explorations. Scott, though lame, was a great rider and pedestrian; and who has not heard of the long excursions that Wordsworth

took on foot? Immanuel Kant was, perhaps, unrivalled among intellectual labourers for the care with which he treated his body. He certainly carried it far further than I am disposed to advocate. For more than thirty years he always rose precisely at the same minute. His breakfast was at five o'clock—a single cup of tea and a pipe of tobacco. Thereafter he worked till one, when he dined; in the afternoon he never missed his walk, and never ate anything in the evening, so that he might work till bedtime. Mr Hamerton tells us how he had a peculiar way of folding himself into the bedclothes, passing them under and over his shoulders, and then he tells us, he used to say to himself, "Can any one be in better health than I am?" Observe—not "who is cleverer, more industrious, more successful than I?" but "who is healthier?"

So much for intellectual workers who carefully tended the physical basis. Turn we now to an instance of one, of great intellect, who purposely neglected his body and deliberately encouraged a morbid habit. Those of you who have been in Brussels have doubtless visited the Wiertz Museum. It contains the works of the painter Wiertz, who thought it his mission to depict the horrible. In order to encourage terrible visions it is said that he took means to procure indigestion, that he used to sup on raw pork, and lie in a bed where he could not straighten himself, and work in a studio where he could not stand upright. The result is painfully evident in his

work; for although he was so industrious that a large building is entirely filled with his canvases, I know of nothing more depressing than that collection of cruelties, obscenities, and dismal horrors. Not only are the subjects revolting, but the technical work—the painting—is bad. I do not doubt that here was a great master ruined by the miserable treatment which be bestowed on his body.

Now let me apply these instances to our present purpose. In order to do so I must repeat the quotation I have already given from the French educationist Guyau: "Outside the sum total of the narrow and positive science indispensable in practical life, all restricted scientific instruction is sterile." The question I have to ask is this, Does our present system of education provide instruction in the positive physical science, which even so stern a classicist as Guyau speaks of as indispensable? I am tempted to believe it does not. I know, for instance, that in the essential matter of food there is a sad lack of information. How many parents are there, for instance, who think that they have provided a sufficient mid-day meal for their children at school, in giving them a slice of white bread, with perhaps some jam or treacle. I am not speaking only of this county, but of districts with which I am acquainted in England. I remember when, as a child, I had incurred punishment, I was given dry bread and water instead of a regular meal, and if I did not eat it, it was said, "Oh, he is not hungry, or he would not refuse that." But those who

said that were ignorant that although bread, even white bread, with plenty of butter, is sustaining food, dry bread is not food at all, or at most but imperfect food; for in order to make flour the corn is deprived of its most nitrogenous parts (those parts which give the value to porridge and oatcake), and little is left except the gluten and the starch of the grain. Therefore, it is quite possible for a hungry boy to reject white bread alone; for it does not contain the heat-giving properties which his system craves, though he will eat it gladly if is thickly spread with butter. It is *not* greed which makes him do so, it is true natural instinct; for butter or other adipose is precisely what is required to make dry bread suitable food.

Gentlemen, I regard knowledge of the elementary chemistry of food as part of the positive science which M. Guyau declares to be "indispensable to practical life," and therefore inseparable from true primary education. Meanwhile, shall I be transgressing on your patience if I dwell for a moment on a system which has already been tried with excellent results in various schools throughout the country—I mean the provision of penny dinners for the scholars in rural districts? Children are sometimes provided with a penny with which to buy food; alas! too often it is spent in sweetmeats, or at best, what Oliver Holmes calls a "boggy bun." Under the system which I venture to commend to your attention, that penny may be laid out in palatable and nutritious food. I cannot explain it better than by quoting from a letter

on the subject, which lately appeared in the 'Westmoreland Gazette':—

"Few will deny that compulsory education, when it is free, must be an inestimable advantage to our people. Would that there were also one more clause in the Bill, insisting on the compulsory feeding at mid-day of these children! Truly it is as useless to ask a brain to do itself full justice when the body is poorly nourished, as it is to expect a steam-engine to run without coal. An occasional visit to any country school after morning lessons will prove what very scanty refreshment is provided for many children by their parents, when their homes lie too distant to allow of their returning daily during the dinner-hour. One slice of white bread is constantly deemed quite sufficient to sustain big growing boys between breakfast and tea time. Perhaps if it were more widely understood what a very simple undertaking it is to start penny dinners in country districts, they would become general throughout England. They have been tried in a few cases, and have invariably proved very successful, and even paid themselves, provided the average attendance is not less than between seventy and eighty. In the village to which allusion is made, the following is the system that has been conducted for several years. A small disused schoolroom, filled with forms, accommodates all the children, and the food is cooked over a medium-sized fireplace in a tiny room adjoining. This is entirely done by a woman from the village, who receives 1s. 6d. a-day for her services, with 6d. extra when the attendance exceeds a hundred. The following is the bill of fare supplied to each child on the payment of 1d. *Every day* there is good meat-soup, filled with barley, carrots, &c., and two days in the week they have in addition suet puddings, with jam or treacle; on two other days Irish

stew (called potato-hash), and on the remaining day rice boiled in milk. These dinners begin on the 1st of November, and continue throughout the winter till April 1st. The only expenditure was at the outset, when all the working utensils—the large earthenware dishes to contain the food, and a hundred basins and spoons for the children—had to be provided. These cost from £3 to £4, and were presented by a lady in the neighbourhood; otherwise the dinners have always paid themselves, excepting last winter, when the price of potatoes was high, but the balance of preceding years made it up quite easily. The average cost for the whole winter comes to about £25. All the waiting on the children is voluntary, as there are several people living near who are pleased to spare at least one half-hour in the week to lend their help, which is only required from 12 to 12.30 in the morning. The accounts are managed by the clergyman and his wife, who appear fully compensated for their trouble by the perfect success which has always attended the penny dinners."

In our haste to train the intelligence we have hitherto overlooked the commonplace necessity of nourishing the frame; in stimulating the brain to action we have increased the drafts which it makes on the circulation, and unless means are used to replenish the blood the result must be a heavy penalty in physical development, and natural repugnance to the task we wish to impose.

But I would carry compulsory instruction in physiology a little—a very little further. We hear a great deal about temperance legislation. For my own part, I believe a great deal more firmly in public opinion in this matter than in prohibitive legislation. In the

early years of this century, intemperance — gross, unveiled intemperance — was still characteristic of aristocratic society. Gentlemen were not ashamed to appear in the presence of ladies in that state in which, were one to be seen on the street in our days, he would be taken to the police station. Public opinion would not tolerate such exhibition of vice now. I gratefully recognise the change which has, within my own recollection, manifested itself in the habits of the middle class. It is, happily, a marked feature of the younger generation of farmers that business can be transacted without incessant libations of whisky. It is, I am convinced, not too much to expect that similar influence will, at no distant date, bring about that drunkenness shall be as much the exception and as much detested among the working classes as it has become among their employers. But how much might this healthy influence of public opinion be strengthened if every boy and girl left school with a knowledge of the physiological effects of alcohol upon the system? Is it probable that any one, for instance, would overcome the natural repugnance to ardent spirits so far as to take a glass of whisky on an empty stomach if he knew accurately what was the cause of that inward glow which the dram-drinker prizes? He would surely pause, if he knew that it was caused by the violent congestion of blood-vessels in a delicate and vital membrane—if he knew that when it is frequently repeated that membrane gets into a morbid or catarrhal state, causing a craving for

drink, involuntary but so intense as to enslave the strongest will. It seems to me that, in this matter, knowledge is indeed power, and that more than half the prevalence of intemperance arises from ignorance. Schoolmasters, then, would be the best temperance agents: they would not require to warn their pupils against drunkenness, they would but require to open their eyes to the process which renders drunkenness an inconquerable habit.

I observe that in the memorandum by the Educational Institute on the allocation of the equivalent grant, a strong claim is made on behalf of technical instruction: schools are called for to "develop commercial, agricultural, and mining education, and for instructing our sailors and fishermen." I am afraid that on that subject I am somewhat halting. If I am right in my contention about the object of education, instruction in such things is not education — it is not *forming* heads, it is *filling* them. Instruction in practical arts is useful and desirable; but if money is to be allotted for that purpose, it is my strong opinion there must be an intermediary authority between the Committee of Council on Education and the schools. The proper bodies for the administration of such funds are undoubtedly the County Councils — the concentrated wisdom of localities. For example, you may have noticed that the other day a proposal was made to devote funds at Honiton for technical instruction in lace-making. Well, the people best able to judge of the prospects of that industry are

the local government of the district. Suppose the Education Department were to decree instruction in the manufacture of Honiton lace, and that some disaster were to overtake that industry, such as free trade has brought upon the silk industry of Coventry, or machinery upon the glove-making industry of Gloucestershire, what would be the result? Why this, that so far from furthering education, the Department would have hindered it, by filling heads with useless instruction instead of developing mental powers to cope with changing circumstances. Technical instruction let there be, easy of access and efficient as possible, but let it be gone about wisely and warily, and do not let us confuse such instruction with education.

One more point and I have done. It is a point which I approach with some trepidation, for it has been the very thickest of the fight for a generation. I am afraid, moreover, that some will esteem me old-fashioned and out of touch with the age in the opinions I hold upon it. It is the old question of religion *versus* secular education. I am unable, for my part, to conceive any education in the true sense, the preparation of a healthy mind in a healthy body, which does not undertake the inculcation of moral principles. And what sufficient motive can you bring forward for morality if you reject religion? Philosophers may say that there is an innate love of virtue in the human breast which suffices. That is altogether too hazy an

influence to be relied on. It was relied on by many persons towards the close of last century; and a strange outcome of it was the frantic disorders and horrors of the Revolution, followed by the more widespread bloodshed brought on Europe by the ungovernable ambition of Napoleon Buonaparte. I advocate no theological school; no controversy about predestination or free-will; the actual presence or the apostolic succession. To children at school, perhaps to older persons also, these things are as vain as the ancient dispute as to how many angels could stand on the point of a needle, or the *chimæra bombinans in vacuo.* Here we are, a nation of professing Christians, on the eve of the twentieth century of Christianity, yet hitherto, so acute is the jealousy of sects, that we cannot hit upon a common form of Christian history and morality to be taught in our schools, lest one sect should thereby obtain an advantage over the other. I care not how it be obtained, but I maintain the belief that it is of vital importance to teach our children that Jesus Christ is a more important person in history than Julius Cæsar—the Sermon on the Mount a loftier code than the morals of Seneca or the sentiments of Epictetus; and I trust we may unite in resisting what some are striving to bring about—the exclusion of religious teaching even as an optional subject.

I have, perhaps, in what I have said, had more regard to the pupils' interests than the teachers. On the whole question I think you have reason to be

satisfied with the greatly enhanced regard which your profession commands from your fellow-men. The public may sometimes seem slow to move in your interests, but they never can be callous to your labours or indifferent to their result. For my part, I venture to offer a sincere hope for the prosperous course of your vocation. I cannot conclude without thanking you for the privilege you have accorded me of addressing you, and for the indulgent hearing which you have given to my somewhat desultory observations.

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